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**HOUSING ELEMENT
MARION, NORTH CAROLINA**

HOUSING ELEMENT

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

PREPARED FOR:

The City of Marion, North Carolina
James H. Segars, Mayor

City Council:

A. Everett Clark, Mayor Pro Tem
Larry Brown
Oliver Goss
Robert Jones
Horace Wilkerson

City Manager

J. Earl Daniels

HOUSING ELEMENT

PREPARED BY:

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

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Linwood M. Horton, Jr., Project Planner
Bernard Rector, Draftsman
Phyllis Wipps, Stenographer

PREPARED:

December, 1977

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this housing study is to analyze existing housing and population characteristics for Marion and the planning area (defined as the area extending not more than one mile in all directions beyond the present city limits), to identify housing needs of the present and future population, and to set forth an implementation program designed to guide the city toward meeting those needs. As a matter of policy the City of Marion will continually seek to achieve the two broad goals in housing as set forth in this study:

1. To insure that each resident regardless of income is provided a decent, safe and sanitary dwelling; and
2. To improve the overall living environment for all residents in the community.

The City of Marion, with technical assistance provided by the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Community Development, is currently involved in an on-going comprehensive planning program. During the past three years the City has prepared a Capital Improvements Budget and Public Improvements Program, a Neighborhood Analysis and an updated Zoning Ordinance. During the current planning year, the City is engaged in the preparation of a Population and Economy Study, a housing element, an updated land development plan and a downtown revitalization study. In order to maintain coordination and consistency in the planning program, this housing study incorporates much of the data on current and projected population contained in other planning documents. In addition, several recommendations contained in other reports, primarily the neighborhood analysis, are incorporated as elements in the implementation section of this study.

Regional Setting

Marion is centrally located in McDowell County and is situated within the Piedmont Province of the Appalachian Complex of Western North Carolina. The piedmont Province terminates approximately fifteen miles west of Marion at the Blue Ridge Province. Thus Marion is at the gateway of the scenic Blue Ridge Mountains, an area with the vast potential for tourism and recreational development, while also enjoying the vast potential of the piedmont. The City of Asheville, with a population of 58,000, is approximately thirty-five miles west of Marion while Hickory and Morganton lie forty-five and twenty-five miles respectfully to the east.

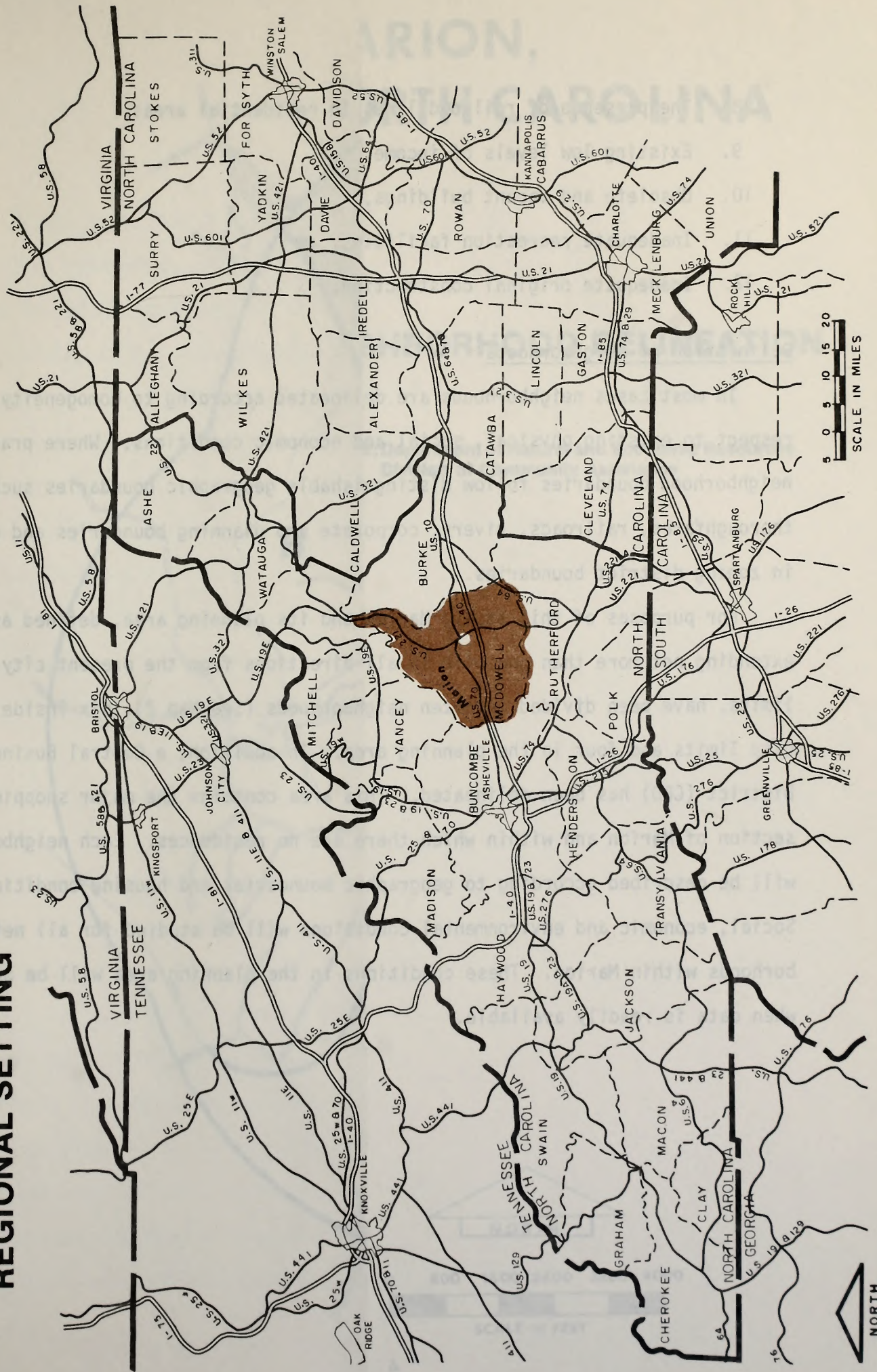
Causes of Blight

For the purposes of this study, the following conditions, although not exhaustive, represent some of the major contributors to blight:

1. Incompatible land uses, such as a mixture of residential, industrial and commercial use.
2. Inadequate community facilities, such as absence of sidewalks, curbs and gutters and fire hydrants or substandard streets, water and sewage systems.
3. Poor lot plotting caused by the absence of subdivision regulations when the land was developed.
4. Absentee ownership of property.
5. Absence of a minimum housing ordinance, building code and zoning ordinance in prior years.
6. Heavy traffic on narrow and poorly designed streets in residential areas.
7. Apathy regarding blight.

MAP 1

REGIONAL SETTING



8. The presence of railroad lines in residential areas.
9. Existing low levels of income.
10. Obsolete and vacant buildings.
11. Inadequate recreation facilities.
12. Inadequate original construction.

Delineation of Neighborhoods

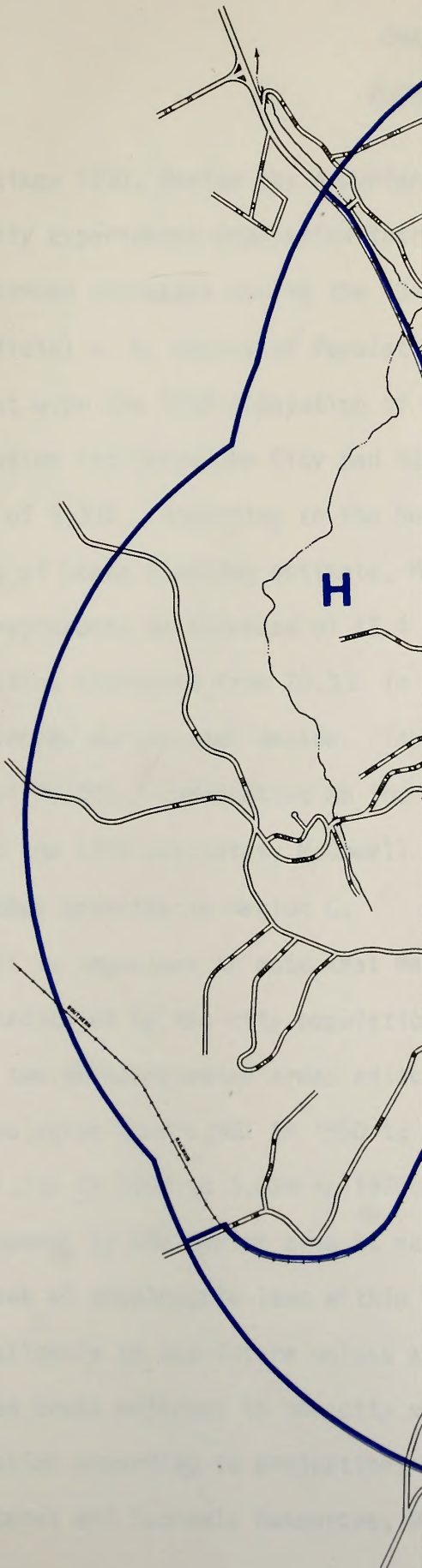
In most cases neighborhoods are delineated according to homogeneity with respect to existing physical, social and economic conditions. Where practical, neighborhood boundaries follow distinguishable geographic boundaries such as thoroughfares, railroads, rivers, corporate and planning boundaries and changes in zoning district boundaries.

For purposes of this study, Marion and its planning area, defined as extending not more than one mile in all directions from the present city limits, have been divided into ten neighborhoods (See Map 2); six inside the city limits and four in the planning area. In addition, a Central Business District (CBD) has been delineated. This area contains the major shopping section of Marion and within which there are no residences. Each neighborhood will be described according to geographic boundaries and housing conditions. Social, economic and environmental conditions will be studied for all neighborhoods within Marion. These conditions in the planning area will be presented when data is readily available.

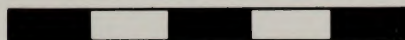
ARION, NORTH CAROLINA

NEIGHBORHOOD DELINEATION

Source: Department of Natural and Economic Resources
Division of Community Assistance



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SCALE IN FEET

8. The presence of railroad lines in residential areas.
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Delineation of Neighborhoods

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MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

MAP 2

NEIGHBORHOOD DELINEATION

SOURCE: Department of Natural and Economic Resources
Division of Community Assistance



CHAPTER 2

POPULATION

Since 1930, Marion has experienced a somewhat erratic population growth. The City experienced population increases during the 1930's and 1950's and experienced decreases during the 1940's and 1960's. In 1960, the City had an official U. S. Census of Population of 3,345 persons, an increase of 22.1 percent over the 1950 population of 2,740. In 1970, however, the Census of Population indicated the City had declined by .3 percent in population to a total of 3,335. According to the North Carolina Department of Administration's Office of State Planning estimate, Marion had a 1975 population of 3,750. This represents an increase of 12.4 percent since 1970. McDowell County's population increased from 20,335 in 1930 to 30,648 in 1970 with increases experienced during each decade. The 1975 estimate indicates a county population of 33,800, representing an increase of 10.3 percent since 1970. According to the 1975 estimates, McDowell County's rate of growth is greater than the other counties in Region C.

It is important to note that Marion serves a significantly larger market than indicated by the city population. The U. S. Census Bureau in 1950 designated two unincorporated areas adjacent to Marion. East Marion has increased in population from 2,901 in 1950 to 3,015 in 1970. West Marion increased from 1,233 in 1950 to 3,034 in 1970. As evidenced by these figures, most development in the Marion area is occurring outside the City. Because of the lack of developable land within the city, city population will change only slightly in the future unless annexation occurs. The urbanized unincorporated areas adjacent to the city should continue to develop and expand in population according to projections made by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Economic Resources, Division of Community Services. These

TABLE 1

POPULATION OF MARION, MCDOWELL COUNTY, EAST MARION AND WEST MARION

Year	Marion	MCDowell County	East Marion	West Marion
1930	2,467	20,336	N/A	N/A
1940	2,889	20,996	N/A	N/A
1950	2,740	25,720	2,901	1,233
1960	3,345	25,742	2,441	2,335
1970	3,335	30,648	3,012	3,034

Source: U. S. Census of Population

TABLE 2





POPULATION PROJECTION, MARION, EAST MARION, WEST MARION

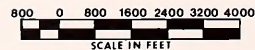
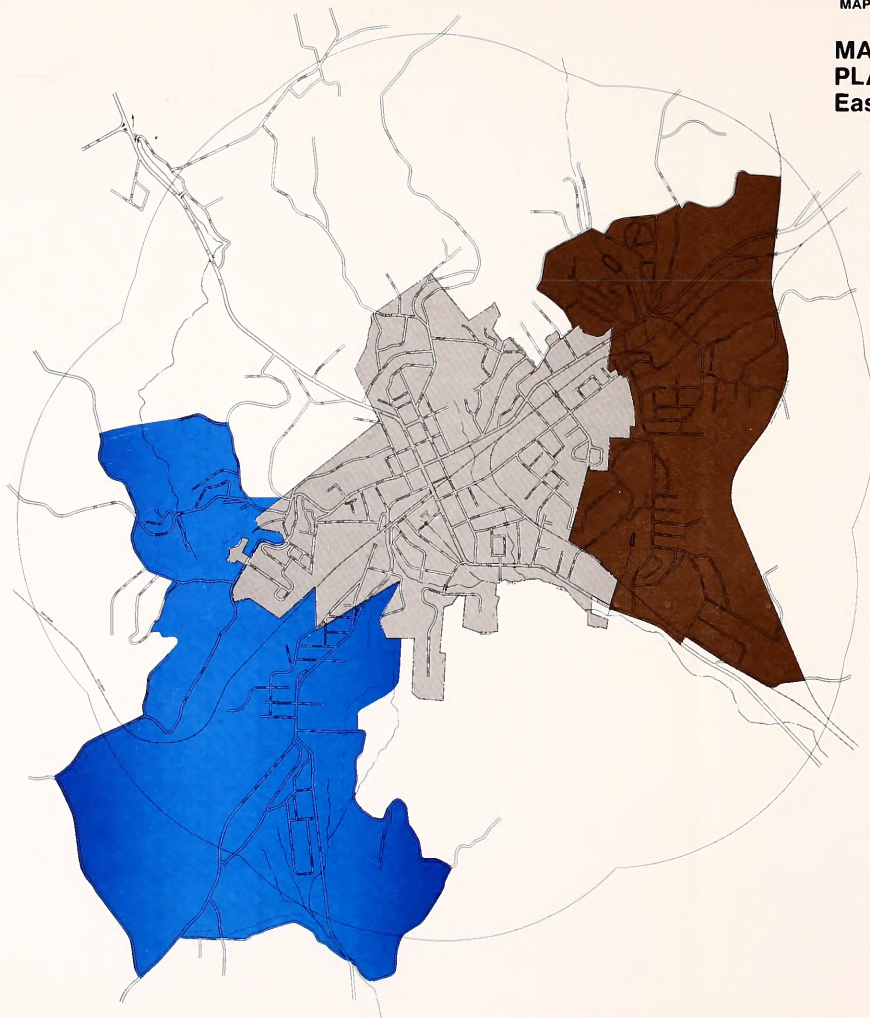
Year	Marion	East Marion	West Marion	Total
1970	3,335	3,015	3,034	9,384
1980	3,552	3,072	3,934	10,588
1990	3,769	3,129	4,834	11,732

Source: N. C. Department of Natural Resources and
Community Development, Division of Community Services.

MARION AND ONE MILE PLANNING AREA (Includes East Marion and West Marion)

LEGEND

-  MARION
-  E. MARION
-  W. MARION
-  ONE MILE PLANNING AREA



projections are contained in the city's Land Development Plan and are thus used for planning purposes. These projections indicate that West Marion will develop the most rapidly and will contain more population than East Marion or the City of Marion by 1990. It is also significant to note that by 1990 the combined population of Marion, East and West Marion will approach 12,000. Municipal water is provided to most of the developing areas outside the City. However, several developing areas outside the City lack adequate sewer treatment and thus should be provided with municipal sewer service. Since most development is occurring outside the City, it is important for health and safety reasons that these areas receive adequate water and sewer service. Thus Marion should develop a water and sewer extension policy for these areas or pursue an aggressive annexation program.

A housing survey was conducted in August, 1976, for Marion and its one-mile planning area by the Department of Natural and Economic Resources, Division of Community Assistance. This survey indicated there were 1,242 dwelling units (including mobile homes) inside the City. Based on the Census Bureau's 1970 figure of 2.8 persons per household for the City, an estimated 3,540 persons were living inside the City. The survey indicated the planning area contained 2,461 dwelling units including mobile homes. Based on the 1970 figure of 3.23 persons per household in McDowell County, the planning area contained an estimated population of 7,949 in 1976. These figures indicate a total 1976 population for Marion and its planning area of approximately 11,489. Marion Township, which includes a larger area than just East Marion, West Marion and the City of Marion, is projected by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Economic Resources, Division of Community Services to have a 1980 population of 16,769 and a 1990 population of 18,997. According to the official U. S. Bureau of the census figures, 14,624 persons

MARION TOWNSHIP



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MARION TOWNSHIP

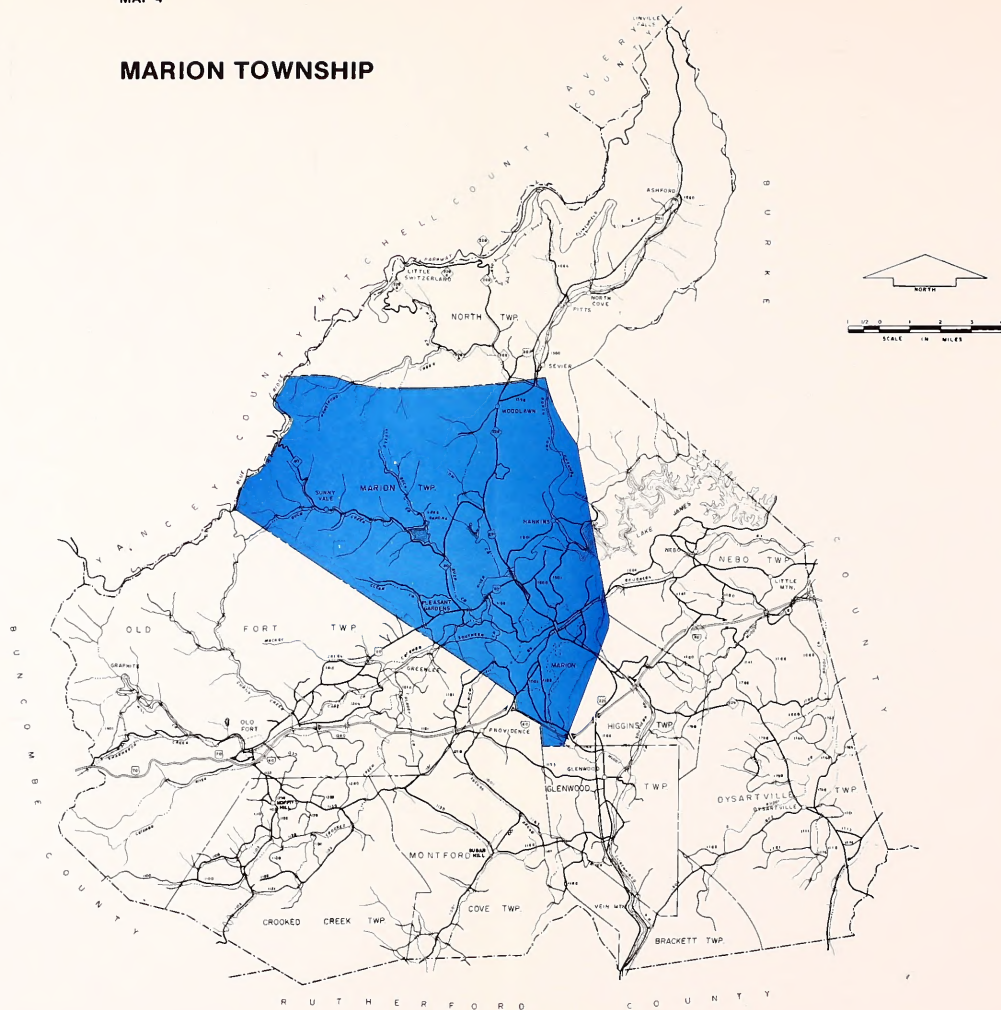


TABLE 3

DWELLING UNITS - MARION AND PLANNING AREA (1976)

	Dwelling Units	Persons Per Household	Estimated Population
Marion	1,242	2.8	3,540
Planning Area	<u>2,461</u>	3.23	<u>7,949</u>
Total	3,703		11,489

Source: 1976 Survey by N. C. Department of Natural Resources and
Community Development, Division of Community Assistance.

lived in Marion Township in 1970.

Migration

Migration can be broadly defined as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence. Migration thus can include a move within the community, whether it be across the street or across town. However, in terms of analyzing the effect of migration on the population and economy of a community, one must be primarily concerned with those persons who migrate into and out of the community.

While there are many factors affecting migration, economics is the single most important consideration. The opportunity to better one's self economically plays an important role in the decision to move from one community to another. Consequently, areas that are able to provide new and expanding job opportunities are the areas experiencing a net in-migration. On the other hand, net out-migration generally occurs in those areas experiencing stagnant or declining job opportunities. Other factors affecting migration include such things as climate, and the quality of the local schools, civic organizations and other public and cultural activities. Then there is the personal factors such as a desire to live near friends or relatives or to continue to live in the community where one has spent his childhood.

Since 1960, McDowell County's annual growth rate has been increasing. During the 1960's, the County experienced an annual growth rate of 1.46. Between 1970 and 1975, the annual county growth rate was 1.94. The annual rate of natural increase in the county has decreased from 1.17 during the 1960's to .92 between 1970 and 1975. The increasing annual growth rate has been the result of a significant increase in the annual net migration rate. This figure increased from .29 during the 1960's to 1.02 during the 1970-75 period. With a declining birth rate, Marion's and McDowell County's

TABLE 4

ANNUAL GROWTH AND MIGRATION RATES

County	Annual Growth Rate 1960-70	Annual Growth Rate 1970-75	Annual Rate Natural Increase		Annual Rate Net Migration	
			1960-70	1970-75	1960-70	1970-75
McDowell	1.46	1.94	1.17	.92	.29	1.02
Rutherford	.50	1.16	.98	.65	-.49	.51
Cleveland	.98	1.46	1.35	.89	-.36	.57
Polk	.30	1.63	.55	.04	-.26	1.58
North Carolina	1.16	1.37	1.31	.85	-.15	.52

Source: N. C. Department of Administration, Office of State Planning

population growth will depend more heavily on their ability to increase the net migration rate through expanding their employment base.

Age and Sex

Age of the population becomes important in terms of the burden placed on all levels of government to meet the needs of the people. A large concentration of elderly and young people places a heavy demand on local resources in terms of health and social costs and the costs associated with providing educational opportunities for the children. On the other hand, young people who have completed school and middle age adults who usually are enjoying the height of their career are the groups that are able to contribute the most to the community in terms of expendable income. These two groups are usually the most able to become involved in civic and other similar types of endeavors. In addition, these people generally require less from the local government in terms of social programs, health care, etc.

According to the 1970 Census, Marion has a relatively old population. The median age of the male population was 32.0 years. Only seven cities in North Carolina with a population between 2,500 and 10,000 had a higher median age for males. The median age for males in McDowell County in 1970 was 28.1 years. The median age for males in North Carolina in 1970 was 25.0 years. Of the males in Marion in 1970, 10.8 percent were 65 years or over in age. The median age for females in Marion in 1970 was 39.7 years. Only five cities in the state with a 1970 population between 2,500 and 10,000 had an older median age for females. The median age for females in North Carolina in 1970 was 28.1 years. The median age for females in McDowell County in 1970 was 30.3. Of the females in Marion in 1970, 16.8 percent were 65 years or older. These figures indicate that Marion contains a substantial proportion of the

TABLE 5
AGE AND SEX COMPOSITION-MARION

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Male, All Ages</u>	1,525	
Under 5 years	121	7.9
5 - 9 years	115	7.5
10 - 14 years	169	11.0
15 - 19 years	139	9.1
20 - 24 years	45	6.2
25 - 29 years	97	6.3
30 - 34 years	66	4.3
35 - 39 years	87	5.7
40 - 44 years	95	6.2
45 - 49 years	122	8.0
50 - 54 years	87	5.7
55 - 59 years	87	5.7
60 - 64 years	79	5.1
65 - 69 years	63	4.1
70 - 74 years	50	3.2
75 years and over	53	3.4
Under 18 years	500	32.7
21 years and over	961	63.0
65 years and over	166	10.8
Median Age	32.0	

TABLE 5 (Cont'd)

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Female, All Ages</u>	1,810	
Under 5 years	116	6.4
5 - 9 years	118	6.5
10 - 14 years	155	8.5
15 - 19 years	130	7.1
20 - 24 years	116	6.4
25 - 29 years	92	5.0
30 - 34 years	87	4.8
35 - 39 years	97	5.3
40 - 44 years	102	5.6
45 - 49 years	126	6.9
50 - 54 years	125	6.8
55 - 59 years	137	7.5
60 - 64 years	104	5.7
65 - 69 years	99	5.4
70 - 74 years	87	4.8
75 years and over	119	6.6
Under 18 years	468	25.8
21 years and over	1,271	70.2
65 years and over	305	16.8
Median Age	39.7	

Source: U. S. Census of Population, 1970

TABLE 6

BLACK-WHITE RACIAL COMPOSITION

	White	Percent	Black	Percent
Marion	3,324	99.8	9	.2
McDowell County	29,028	94.8	1,602	5.2
Rutherford County	42,206	89.1	5,091	10.7
Cleveland County	57,587	79.3	14,911	20.5
Polk County	10,294	87.7	1,418	12.0
North Carolina	3,901,767	76.7	1,126,478	22.1

Source: 1970 U. S. Census of Population

elderly population of McDowell County. Further substantiating this finding is the fact that in 1970 Marion contained 10.8 percent of the total population of McDowell County but contained 17.1 percent of those persons seventy-five years and older living in the county. On the other hand, Marion contains only 9.2 percent of those persons under twenty years of age in the county.

Race

The Black population of Marion is very small. The 1970 Census reported only nine Blacks in the City. This figure amounted to only .2 percent of the total City population. The Census Bureau reported 1,602 Blacks in McDowell County in 1970. This accounted for 5.2 percent of the total county population. Percent Black population in other counties in Region C in 1970 were: Polk - 12 percent, Rutherford - 11 percent and Cleveland - 21 percent. Blacks comprised 22 percent of the population of North Carolina in 1970.

Education

Education and the local educational program are extremely important for the future of any community. A well educated and skilled labor force becomes very attractive to potential new industry. Community growth and improvement depend greatly on an educated and participating public. The quality of the local school system is important to industry executives and other professionals with families. In addition, the availability of adult education courses at local colleges and technical schools can be an important factor in attracting new industry. In an era when competition for jobs becomes more keen each year, those areas with relatively large percentages of poorly educated, unskilled workers and poor quality school systems will most likely be by-passed for those people and areas offering the quality industry seeks. In turn,

TABLE 7

EDUCATIONAL LEVELS - 1970

	Percent 25 Years & Over Completing High School	Percent 25 Years & Over With 4 or more Years College	Median School Years Completed
Marion	22	12	11.4
Rutherfordton	16	12	10.7
Spindale	16	4	9.8
Forest City	18	8	10.5
North Carolina	21	5	10.8

Source: 1970 Census of Population

TABLE 8

EDUCATION ENROLLMENT - MCDOWELL COUNTY

School Year	Public Schools	Community Colleges (Fall)	Higher Education Undergrad (Fall)	
			Public	Private
1965	7,115	N/A	N/A	N/A
1966-67	6,953	N/A	205	88
1967-68	6,910	431	210	81
1968-69	6,987	434	214	80
1969-70	6,973	669	226	69
1970-71	6,861	806	256	58
1971-72	6,855	1,256	204	63
1972-73	6,770	1,113	247	53
1973-74	6,743	893	268	43
1974-75	6,838	812	284	50
1975-76	6,955	1,638	436	91

Source: Profile, North Carolina Counties, 1977
N. C. Department of Administration

when good paying industries fail to locate in an area, the area loses the better educated young people. This results in a larger percentage of uneducated who are left behind.

Marion has a relatively well educated population. The City had a larger percentage of persons 25 years and over completing four years of high school than any other community of similar size in Region C in 1970. This figure is also higher than the state average. Marion and Rutherfordton both had 12 percent of the persons 25 years and over completing four or more years of college. This figure was higher than for the other similar size communities in Region C and for the State. In terms of median school years completed, Marion also ranked higher than the State or other communities in Region C. On a statewide basis, only 25 percent of the communities with a 1970 population between 2,500 and 10,000 persons had a higher median school years completed figure.

Marion and McDowell County have very nice public school facilities. In addition, the presence of McDowell Technical Institute provides the opportunity for many adults to complete or continue their education while also providing the opportunity to obtain marketable skills for those young people who have no desire or cannot afford to attend college.

These factors should prove beneficial in the future to attracting relatively high paying skilled employment to the Marion area.

Income

Income is considered a good indicator of the health of the local economy and the standard of living of the people. Areas with relatively high income levels indicate the ability to attract high paying, skilled employment which in turn indicates a well educated population. Higher income areas are also

TABLE 9
FAMILY INCOME BREAKDOWN FOR MARION

<u>Family Income</u>	<u>Number of Families</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than \$1,000	29	3.0
\$ 1,000 - \$ 1,999	53	5.4
\$ 2,000 - \$ 2,999	31	3.2
\$ 3,000 - \$ 3,999	68	7.0
\$ 4,000 - \$ 4,999	69	7.1
\$ 5,000 - \$ 5,999	64	6.6
\$ 6,000 - \$ 6,999	84	8.7
\$ 7,000 - \$ 7,999	102	10.5
\$ 8,000 - \$ 8,999	69	7.1
\$ 9,000 - \$ 9,999	106	10.9
\$10,000 - \$11,999	103	10.6
\$12,000 - \$14,999	77	7.9
\$15,000 - \$24,999	60	6.2
\$25,000 - \$49,999	50	5.1
\$50,000 or more	0	0
Median Family Income	\$7,828	
Per Capita Income	\$2,911	

Percent of families less than poverty level - 13.1%.

Source: 1970 U. S. Census of Population

TABLE 10

FAMILY INCOME COMPARISONS

Income	Marion	Rutherfordton	Spindale	Forest City	North Carolina
Median	\$7,828	6,646	7,572	7,366	7,770
Per Capita	\$2,911	2,716	2,518	2,530	2,485

Source: 1970 U. S. Census of Population

attractive to the more educated people in other areas.

Marion is characterized by relatively high income levels. Both the median family income and per capita income figures were higher in 1970 for Marion than for North Carolina or for the other similar sized communities in Region C. On a statewide basis, 46 percent of the communities in North Carolina with a 1970 population between 2,500 and 10,000 persons were characterized by a higher median income than Marion while only ten percent had a higher per capita income.

\$ 4,000 - \$ 4,999

\$ 5,000 - \$ 5,999

\$ 6,000 - \$ 6,999

\$ 7,000 - \$ 7,999

\$ 8,000 - \$ 8,999

\$ 9,000 - \$ 9,999

\$10,000 - \$11,999

\$12,000 - \$14,999

\$15,000 - \$19,999

\$20,000 - \$24,999

\$25,000 or more

Median Family Income 57,827

Per Capita Income 31,911

Percent of Families less than poverty level - 12

Source: 1970 U. S. Census of Population

CHAPTER 3

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Housing Conditions

Introduction

Due to the recent recession, housing construction nationwide has been slowed significantly. Marion is no exception. The upward mobility of families into better quality housing involves a filtering process. When the housing market is in a depressed condition, this filtering process is significantly slowed. This hurts lower income families the most. Dwelling units become available for occupancy through being vacated or through new housing stock. Vacated housing can occur either through death of the residents or a change of residence. Often, as a family's size and income increase it needs and can afford larger more expensive homes. These are usually the newer homes built on cheaper land at the periphery of the city. The vacated older housing then becomes available to the lower income families as a result of a decline in market price due to a lack of demand from higher income families. The implication of this filtering process is that if the relative price of the housing decreases more rapidly than the quality, then the lower income families will be able to afford successively better quality housing.

Basically, there are two factors affecting the rate of filtering: the rate of construction of new housing and the demand for housing. If the rate of construction is greater than the demand then the relative value of the older housing may decrease quite rapidly. The depth of this filtering depends upon the range in value of the new housing being constructed. If most of the new housing is for the more wealthy then upward filtering of lower income groups will be possible with these groups occupying the houses previously owned by the more wealthy. On the other hand, with a depressed housing construction market the relative value of all housing units will not

decrease and will possibly increase if there is a strong demand for housing. In this situation, the quality of housing might decrease while the price would not. The lower income families suffer the most as they are forced to occupy substandard housing at quite high rents.

This condition is fairly characteristic of Marion as in most areas of the country. With very little upward mobility in the housing market it is extremely important that Marion continue to pursue a vigorous housing code enforcement program in order to upgrade the deteriorating units and to prevent the standard units from deteriorating. There is also a need for more public housing in order to provide for those presently living in dilapidated units. When this is done the vacated dilapidated houses can be demolished. Marion is fortunate in that only approximately 2.4 percent of the housing units inside the city limits are classified as dilapidated.

Out of a total of 3,703 dwelling units located in Marion and the planning area, 2,461 (66 percent) are located outside the city limits. In addition most new housing construction is occurring in the planning area outside the city. At the present time neither zoning, building code enforcement nor subdivision regulations are enforced in the planning area. Marion enforces building codes and zoning within its city limits. The planning area contains a much larger percentage of substandard housing than does the city. It is not uncommon to find an expensive house located next to a substandard house in the planning area. Given the density of existing development and the high probability that most new development will occur in the planning area, it is extremely important that zoning, building codes and subdivision regulations be enforced either by the city or the county. This is necessary to prevent haphazard development that will become a more acute problem as this area continues to develop.

External Survey

A housing survey was conducted for Marion and its planning area in August, 1976 (See Table 11). The survey consisted only of a "windshield inspection." However, an internal inspection of housing units might in some cases justify placing the unit in another classification--probably a lower one. Houses were conditioned as either standard, deteriorating or dilapidated. The following criteria were used in the survey:

1. Standard Housing: Standard housing has no defects, or only slight defects which normally are corrected during the course of regular maintenance. Examples of slight defects are: lack of paint, slight damage to porch or steps and small cracks in walls.
2. Deteriorating Housing: Deteriorating housing needs more repair than is provided in the course of regular maintenance. Such housing has one or more defects that must be corrected if the unit is to continue to provide safe and adequate shelter. Examples of defects are: holes, open cracks, loose or missing material over small area of wall, foundation, floor or roof, or badly damaged steps or porch.
3. Dilapidated Housing: Dilapidated housing does not provide safe and adequate shelter; in its present condition, it endangers the health, safety, or well-being of its occupants. Such housing represents inadequate original construction or has one or more critical defects so critical or wide-spread that the structure should be extensively repaired, rebuilt or torn down. Examples

TABLE 11

SURVEY OF HOUSING CONDITIONS BY NEIGHBORHOOD

Neighborhood	Multi-Family		Standard		Deteriorated		Dilapidated		Mobile Homes		Total DU's
City	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
A	4	2.5	135	87.6	16	10.3	2	1.2	1	.6	158
B	2	.7	162	57.2	90	31.3	15	5.3	16	5.7	285
C	20	19.0	74	87.1	9	10.6	1	1.2	1	1.2	105
D	25	10.2	184	83.7	29	13.2	1	.5	6	2.7	245
E	8	3.5	172	70.9	33	14.7	6	2.7	11	5.0	230
F	16	7.3	138	68.0	46	22.7	5	2.5	14	6.9	219
Subtotal	75	6.0	865	69.6	223	18.0	30	2.4	49	3.9	1,242
Planning Area											
G	34	6.7	204	42.9	140	29.5	32	6.7	99	20.8	509
H	29	6.6	234	56.7	109	26.4	19	4.6	51	12.3	442
I	22	3.1	399	57.4	194	27.9	24	3.5	78	11.2	717
J	22	2.8	310	40.2	333	43.2	70	9.1	58	7.5	793
Subtotal	107	4.3	1,147	48.7	776	33.0	145	6.2	286	12.1	2,461
TOTAL	182	4.9	2,012	57.1	999	28.4	175	5.0	335	9.5	3,703

SOURCE: 1976 Survey by Department of Natural and Economic Resources, Division of Community Assistance

of defects are: holes, open cracks, loose or missing materials over a large area of the foundation, walls or roof, and extensive damage by storm, fire or flood; sagging roof or foundation. Such structures, in order to meet minimum standards, should require drastic restoration that would be economically unfeasible and, therefore, should be demolished.

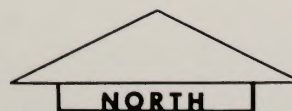
Although not to the extent of some other cities in North Carolina of similar size, the housing stock in Marion is fairly old with just over forty percent (40%) of the units being built before 1940. This, along with the fact that upward mobility in the housing market is very limited, creates a situation making it very important that existing housing be properly maintained and in many cases upgraded. Thus the city should pursue active code enforcement and rehabilitation programs. For this reason, a conscious effort was made to classify substandard housing as deteriorated rather than dilapidated if it appeared at all feasible that the unit could be upgraded. Emphasis was placed on the impact of a house upon the neighborhood in terms of health hazards and property values rather than the impact of internal conditions on the residences themselves.

Within the city limits the only area of concentrated substandard housing is located in the northwestern section of town primarily between Tate and Carson Streets. The planning area contains several large areas of substandard housing including the areas northeast and east of the city. Most of the houses in this section were originally built to house employees of both the Marion Manufacturing and Clinchfield Manufacturing Plants. This is a densely developed area that lacks adequate municipal services. In addition the area just south of the city limits primarily between Sugar Hill Road and the Railroad contains a relatively large concentration of substandard housing.

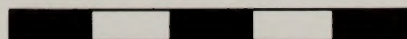
ARION, NORTH CAROLINA

OR AREAS OF STANDARD HOUSING

E: Department of Natural and Economic Resources
Division of Community Assistance



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SCALE IN FEET

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

MAP 5

MAJOR AREAS OF SUBSTANDARD HOUSING

SOURCE: Department of Natural and Economic Resources
Division of Community Assistance



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SCALE IN FEET

A less obvious but equally serious situation exists in the fact that many substandard houses are located in or near some of the nicer residential section both within the city and the planning area. It is important that Marion realize this situation. Once a few houses in an area deteriorate to a substandard condition, other houses in the area often begin to deteriorate in a contagious manner through lack of maintenance. Deteriorating houses detract from the appearance of surrounding houses, thus reducing the desirability and consequently, the value of these houses for residential purposes. Sometimes these houses are divided into several small apartments and rented rather than sold. Quite often absentee landlords do not maintain their rental property well, especially in a deteriorating area.

U. S. Census Survey of Housing

Table 12 provides a breakdown of housing characteristics for Marion as compiled by the 1970 U. S. Census of Housing. Any differences between these figures and those compiled by the external survey can be explained by the fact that the external survey counted each dwelling as one unit regardless of the number of families living in it whereas the Census Bureau counted each family as a separate unit.

New Residential Construction

From June, 1974 through July, 1976, there were twenty one houses constructed within the Marion city limits. Of these, four were built in 1974, twelve in 1975 and five during the first six months of 1976. Most of this construction has been located in Neighborhood E which contains the Foxfire Subdivision. More construction will take place in this subdivision since there remain several vacant building lots. Within the city limits only Neighborhood B has not experienced any new residential construction during

TABLE 12
HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS FOR MARION

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percent of Total Housing Units</u>
All Dwelling Units	1,232	100%
Owner-Occupied	700	56.8
White	695	56.4
Non-White	5	.4
Renter-Occupied	465	37.7
White	465	37.7
Non-White	0	0
Vacant	65	5.2
All Plumbing	1,117	90.6
Lacking Hot Water	33	2.6
Lacking Other Plumbing	80	6.4
Built before 1940	501	40.7

SOURCE: 1970 U. S. Census of Housing

TABLE 13

NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION 1974-1976

Neighborhood	New Dwelling Units	Per 100 Occupied Dwelling Units
A	3	1.898
B	0	0
C	3	2.857
D	2	.847
E	11	4.782
F	<u>2</u>	<u>.913</u>
TOTAL	21	1.703

SOURCE: Marion Building Inspector's Office

the past two years. Neighborhood B contains the largest concentration (37.1%) of substandard housing of any neighborhood within the city limits. This indicates, in part, that builders fear the spread of blight from existing substandard housing.

	100%	
	0	
128.3	8	
148.	3	
218.	17	
218.	5	
205.1	13	TOTAL
Variant	35	
All Plumbing	137	
Lacking Hot Water	30	
Lacking Water Plumbing	39	
5.175 square feet	101	

SOURCE: Martin Building Inspection Office

SOURCE: 1970 U.S. Census of Housing

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

IDENTICAL INSTRUCTION, 1974-1976

END

1974

1975

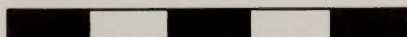
1976

E: Marion Building Inspector

ation for within corporate limits only)



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SCALE IN FEET

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

MAP 6

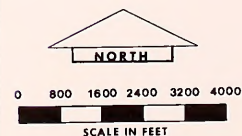
RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION, 1974-1976

LEGEND

- 1974
- 1975
- 1976

SOURCE: Marion Building Inspector

(Information for within corporate limits only)





Economic Conditions

Economic factors that contribute to blight in Marion will be discussed in the following terms:

1. Family income.
2. Value of owner-occupied dwelling units.
3. Average monthly rent of renter-occupied housing.

Family Income

Table 14 represents family income in Marion. According to the 1970 Census, thirteen point one (13.1) percent of the families inside the city limits were classified as below the poverty level.

Value of Owner-Occupied Housing and Monthly Rent

Table 15 provides a breakdown of the value of owner-occupied housing in Marion. There was a larger percentage of houses valued at over \$35,000 than in many other cities of similar size in North Carolina. Table 16 provides a breakdown of the cost of renter-occupied units in 1970. For a city of 3,600 population, Marion has several relatively nice rental units.

TABLE 14
FAMILY INCOME BREAKDOWN FOR MARION

<u>Family Income</u>	<u>Number of Families</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than \$1,000	29	3.0
\$ 1,000 - \$ 1,999	53	5.4
\$ 2,000 - \$ 2,999	31	3.2
\$ 3,000 - \$ 3,999	68	7.0
\$ 4,000 - \$ 4,999	69	7.1
\$ 5,000 - \$ 5,999	64	6.6
\$ 6,000 - \$ 6,999	84	8.7
\$ 7,000 - \$ 7,999	102	10.5
\$ 8,000 - \$ 8,999	69	7.1
\$ 9,000 - \$ 9,999	106	10.9
\$10,000 - \$11,999	103	10.6
\$12,000 - \$14,999	77	7.9
\$15,000 - \$24,999	60	6.2
\$25,000 - \$49,999	50	5.1
\$50,000 or more	0	0
Median Family Income	\$7,828	
Per capita income	\$2,911	

Percent of families less than poverty level - - 13.1%

SOURCE: 1970 U. S. Census of Population

TABLE 15
VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS

Owner-Occupied Value	Total Dwelling Units	Percent of Dwelling Units
Owner-Occupied	637	
Less than \$5,000	22	3.4
\$ 5,000 - \$ 9,999	170	26.6
\$10,000 - \$14,999	170	26.6
\$15,000 - \$19,999	103	16.1
\$20,000 - \$24,999	69	10.8
\$25,000 - \$34,999	60	9.4
\$35,000 or more	43	6.7
Median	\$13,200	

Fire Occurrences (Residential)

Fires can occur anywhere, although their probability of occurrence is greater in blighted areas where more houses are likely to have faulty flue-gas systems and electrical wiring. An accumulation of rubbish and other combustible material will also increase the likelihood of fire occurrence. The Marine Fire Department responds to calls both inside the city and in the planning area. Of a total of 38 residential fires between January, 1975 and July, 1978, eleven were inside the city and twenty-seven were in the planning area (See Map 2 and Table 17). Within the city, Neighborhood I

SOURCE: 1970 U. S. Census of Housing

TABLE 16
RENTAL CHARGE (CONTRACT RENT)

Renter-Occupied	Total	Percent of Total
Renter-occupied	465	
Less than \$30	61	13.1
\$ 30 to \$ 39	82	17.6
\$ 40 to \$ 59	160	34.4
\$ 60 to \$ 79	77	16.5
\$ 80 to \$ 99	37	7.9
\$100 to \$149	14	3.0
\$150 or more	3	.6
No Cash Rent	31	6.6
Median Rent	\$49	

SOURCE: 1970 U. S. Census of Housing

Environmental Conditions

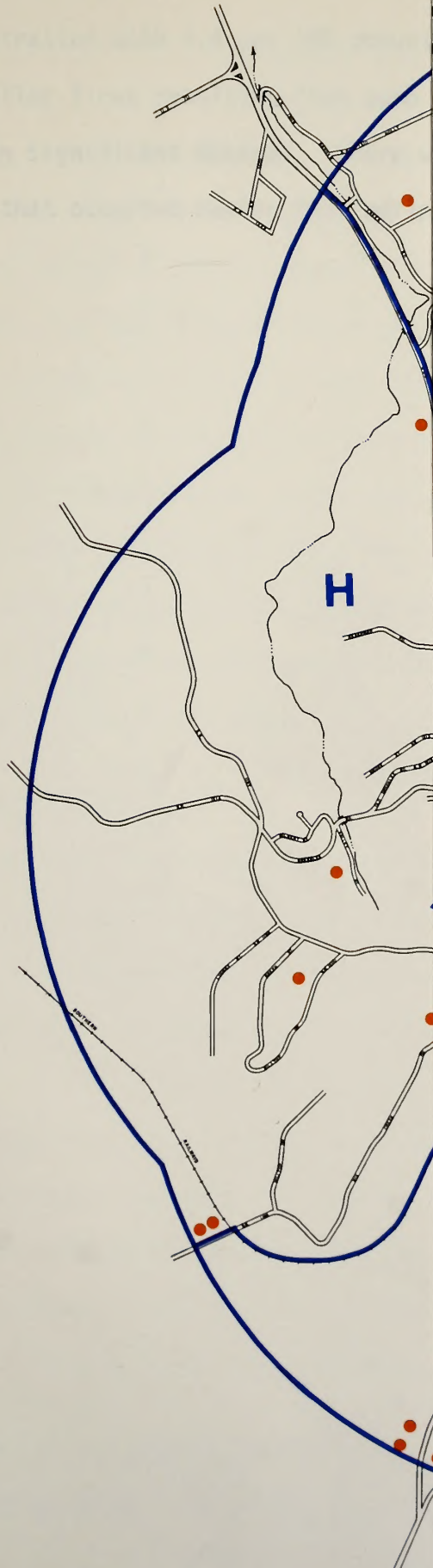
Environmental conditions are probably the most observable indicators of a blighted environment. However, there are some environmental conditions that may be the root cause of blight but might not be readily observable until blight has spread. It is very important to realize, therefore, that environmental conditions not only delineate the blighted areas but also indicate the areas where there is present blighting factors although such areas may not have reached the point that they are visually blighted. The following environmental indicators of blight will be discussed:

1. Fire occurrences (residential)
2. Vehicle and pedestrian accidents
3. Unpaved streets
4. Inadequate recreation and school facilities
5. Heavy traffic volumes

Fire Occurrences (Residential)

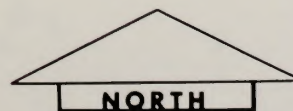
Fires can occur anywhere, although their probability of occurrence is greater in blighted areas where more houses are likely to have faulty heating systems and electrical wiring. An accumulation of rubbish and other combustible material will also increase the likelihood of fire occurrences. The Marion Fire Department responds to calls both inside the city and in the planning area. Of a total of 38 residential fires between January, 1975 and July, 1976, eleven were inside the city and twenty-seven were in the planning area (See Map 5, and Table 17). Within the city, Neighborhood F had the largest concentration of fires with 1.5 fires per 100 occupied dwelling units. In the planning area, Neighborhood H had the largest

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

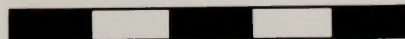


RESIDENTIAL FIRES,
1970-1976

Map by Marion Fire Department



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SCALE IN FEET

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

MAP 7

RESIDENTIAL FIRES, 1975-1976

SOURCE: Marion Fire Department



0 800 1600 2400 3200 4000



SCALE IN FEET



concentration with 1.4 per 100 occupied dwelling units. There were a number of smaller fires resulting from such things as hot grease which did not result in significant damages. There were also several vehicle and minor grass fires that occurred during this period.

TABLE 17
MAJOR RESIDENTIAL FIRES 1975-1976

<u>Neighborhood</u>		<u>No. of Fires</u>
City	A	0
	B	2
	C	1
	D	3
	E	2
	F	<u>3</u>
	Subtotal	11
Fringe	G	5
	H	6
	I	8
	J	<u>8</u>
	Subtotal	<u>27</u>
	TOTAL	<u><u>38</u></u>

SOURCE: Marion Fire Department

Vehicle and Pedestrian Accidents

Vehicle and pedestrian accidents are generally higher in areas containing narrow and unpaved streets, heavy traffic volumes, mixed land use and no sidewalks. Most accidents in Marion can be attributed primarily to carelessness at signal lights in and around the Central Business District. As can be seen from Map 6 most of the accidents occurred in the downtown area primarily along Main Street between Fort and State Streets. From a total of 417 accidents reported in Marion between January, 1975 and July, 1976, 175 occurred in the downtown area. In addition, there were several accidents reported on East Court Street, State Street in the vicinity of the junior high school and on North Logan Street at its intersection with North Main Street. Most of the residential areas have been relatively accident free during this period of time.

Unpaved Streets

Unpaved streets contribute to blight in that they cause residents to lose pride and interest in their neighborhoods because of the mud, dust, noise and erosion that are products of such streets. There are very few unpaved streets in Marion and the planning area. Within the city limits, there are only .3 miles of unpaved streets. In the planning area, there are approximately 7.28 miles of unpaved streets. Inside the city limits Neighborhood C has the most unpaved streets with approximately .16 miles. Neighborhoods A and D have no unpaved streets. In the planning area, Neighborhood J contains the most unpaved streets with approximately 2.17 miles. Neighborhood G has the least with 1.32 miles.

Recreation and School Facilities

Recreation: Due to increased productivity and shorter work weeks the

Vehicle and Pedestrian Accidents

Vehicle and pedestrian accidents are generally higher in areas containing narrow, busy streets, heavy traffic volume, and no sidewalks. Most accidents in Madison are attributed primarily to driver's inattention, failure to yield, and failure to stop at a red light. In and around the Central Business District, the most serious accidents occur in the downtown area and are mostly along Main Street between First and State Streets. From a total of 475 accidents reported in Madison between January, 1975 and July, 1976, 112 occurred in the downtown area. In addition, there were several accidents reported on East Court Street, State Street, and the vicinity of the Junior high school and the North Logan Street at its intersection with West Main Street. Most of the residential areas have been relatively accident free during this period of time.

Unpaved Streets

Unpaved streets contribute to safety in that they cause vehicles to lose grip and interest in their neighborhoods because of the mud, dust, noise and erosion that are products of such streets. There are very few unpaved streets in Madison and the planning area. Within the city limits, there are only 1.3 miles of unpaved streets. In the planning area, there are approximately 7.35 miles of unpaved streets. Inside the city limits, Neighborhood C has the most unpaved streets with approximately 1.6 miles. Neighborhoods A and D have no unpaved streets. In the planning area, Neighborhood A contains the most unpaved streets with approximately 2.77 miles. Neighborhood B has the least with 1.35 miles.

Recreation and School Facilities

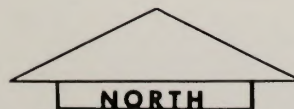
Recreation: Due to increased productivity and shorter work weeks the

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

VEHICLE and PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS, 1975-1976

Source: Marion Police Department
(Information for within corporate limits only)

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SCALE IN FEET

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

MAP 8

VEHICLE and PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS, 1975-1976

SOURCE: Marion Police Department
(information for within corporate limits only)

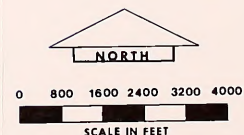




TABLE 18
VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS
January, 1975 - June, 1976

Neighborhood	Accidents	Number of Accidents Per 100 Occupied Dwelling Units
A	37	24.0
B	63	23.2
C	17	20.0
D	65	29.5
E	20	9.0
F	<u>40</u>	<u>19.7</u>
Subtotal	242	20.9
Downtown	<u>175</u>	
Total	<u><u>417</u></u>	

NOTE: Information for within the city limits only.

TABLE 10

VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS
January, 1975 - June, 1975

Neighborhood	Accidents	Number of Accidents per 100 Occupied Living Units
A	21	24.0
B	63	53.2
C	17	50.0
D	62	39.2
E	26	9.0
F	40	19.1
Subtotal	245	20.9
Downtown	170	
Total	415	

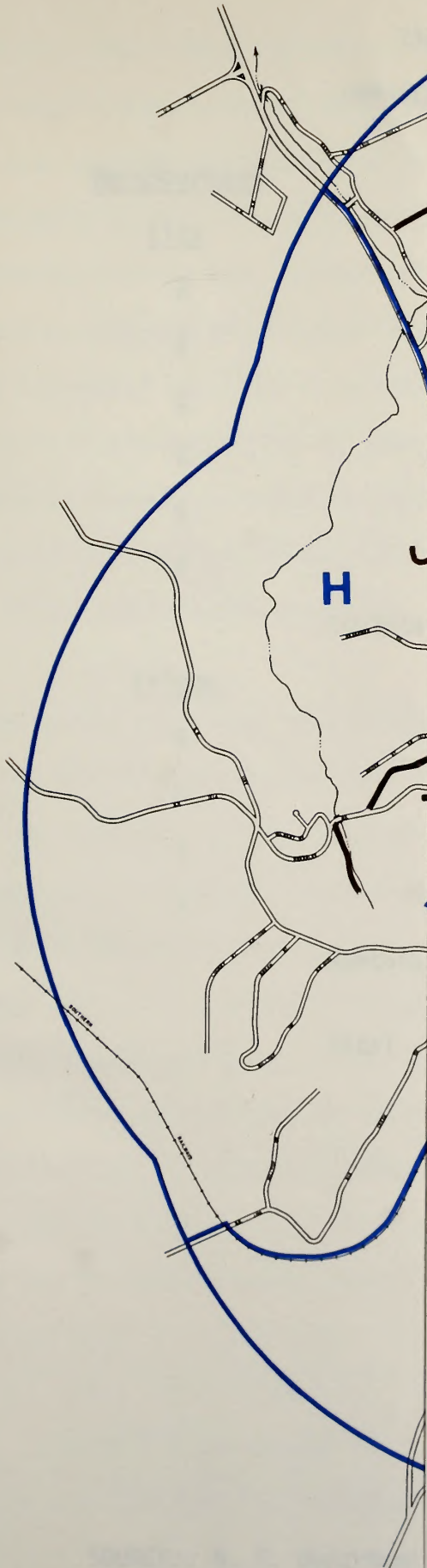
NOTE: Information for within the city limits only.

SOURCE: Norton Police Department

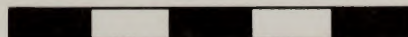
ARION, ORTH CAROLINA

AVED STREETS

E: Department of Natural and Economic Resources
Division of Community Assistance



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SCALE IN FEET

TABLE 1A

VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS
January, 1975 - June, 1975

Neighborhood	Accidents	Number of Accidents Per 100 Occupied Residential Units
A	27	24.0
B	63	23.5
C	19	20.0
D	61	20.2
E	20	2.0
F	40	19.3
Subtotal	245	20.9
Downtown	175	
Total	420	

NOTE: Information for within the city limits only.

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

MAP 9

UNPAVED STREETS

SOURCE: Department of Natural and Economic Resources
Division of Community Assistance



0 800 1600 2400 3200 4000
SCALE IN FEET

TABLE 19

UNPAVED STREETS

<u>Neighborhood</u>		<u>Miles</u>
<u>City</u>		
A		0
B		.05
C		.16
D		0
E		.07
F		<u>.02</u>
Subtotal		.30
<u>Fringe</u>		
G		1.32
H		1.65
I		2.14
J		<u>2.17</u>
Subtotal		<u>7.28</u>
Total		<u><u>7.58</u></u>

SOURCE: N. C. Department of Transportation

American people are experiencing more leisure time than at any time in the past. They are demanding adequate recreation facilities and programs to enable them to utilize their leisure hours in the most enjoyable and productive manner possible. The time is fast approaching when an adequate recreation program can no longer be considered a luxury or a service to be provided only when all other governmental services have been adequately provided for. An adequate recreation program is of benefit to the total community in that it ensures that leisure hours are utilized for activities that are beneficial both to the individual and society. Where an adequate recreation program is lacking, leisure time is often utilized for activities that are harmful to both the individual and the community. This is particularly true for young people.

Adequate public recreation is lacking in Marion. Most of the public schools in Marion and the planning area provide some recreational use such as ballfields, tennis courts and playground equipment. However, there is only one municipally owned recreation area within Marion and the planning area. Contained here are tennis courts, playground equipment, a limited amount of picnic facilities, and a community building. This area is inadequate to serve the needs of the citizens of Marion. In addition, there are no public swimming facilities within Marion or the planning area.

Some recreational equipment is provided at several of the public schools. A ballfield, basketball court and some playground equipment are located at Marion Elementary School on Robert Street. East McDowell Junior High School on State Street contains four tennis courts, a large ballfield, a football stadium and a gymnasium. The newly constructed Eastfield Elementary School contains indoor basketball courts and a lighted baseball field with bleachers. Clinchfield and East Marion Junior High Schools

have been closed. However, there are some limited recreational facilities at each one of these sites. In addition, there is a small playground located behind the McDowell Arts Center on Tate Street. Although located approximately one mile outside the planning area, both McDowell Junior High and McDowell High Schools provide some recreational space. The high school presently contains a large gym and a baseball field. A new football field and four tennis courts are presently under construction. The junior high school contains a small gym and a football and baseball field combined. The major deficiencies regarding school recreation facilities are a lack of maintenance and upkeep, little land devoted specifically to recreation and few facilities. These points indicate the lack of a programmed approach to recreation activities.

The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) utilizes an outdoor recreation area classification system which divides recreational areas into six classes according to their use and natural features. BOR Class I facilities are designated for areas with an urban population. Class I facilities can be described as follows:

High density recreation areas are usually within or near major centers of urban population but may occur within such units as natural parks and forests remote from population concentrations. The activities are intensive day or weekend type such as picnicking, water sports, group field games, winter sports and other activities for many people.

Intensive use recreation areas include but are not limited to:

1. Playground

Basic concepts: The playground is located within a

neighborhood often in conjunction with an elementary school and is designed to serve the active recreation needs of children six to fifteen years of age. This type area is usually developed with about 90 percent of the surface area for active recreation and the remainder for buffer. It is used primarily during the daylight hours.

Size: Approximately 2 to 5 acres

Service Radius: Generally 3/8 mile maximum

Features: Apparatus area, multi-use courts, shelter structure and open space.

Activities: May be supervised during summer program only but preferably year-round.

Responsibility: Usually operated by municipal recreation system but may be provided by various private agencies.

2. Neighborhood Park

Basic concepts: This area is usually landscaped open space found at various points within a city that are not suitable or desirable for other types of development (such as floodplains, drainage ways, etc.). It serves as a place where the passive leisure interests and relaxation needs of all ages can be met. Usually, no more than 50 percent of the surface area is developed for informal active recreation, with the rest being primarily natural open space.

Size: Approximately 3 to 7 acres

Service Radius: Generally $\frac{1}{2}$ mile maximum.

Features: Lawn, shrubbery, walks, dispersed seating accommodations

Activities: Unstructured free play and leisure relaxation

Responsibility: Usually maintained by municipal park and/or recreation system although sometimes responsibility of municipal public works department.

The preceeding information was taken from the Community Facilities Plan Recreation Section for McDowell County, North Carolina, prepared by the North Carolina Department of Local Affairs, Division of Community Planning in 1971. This report should be consulted for more detailed information.

In conducting the housing survey several open space areas were noted that might be possible sites for BOR Class I recreation use. These include the following:

1. Along Morgan Street between the street and the Creek;
2. Northeastern corner of intersection of Robert Street and Fleming Avenue;
3. Southeastern corner of the intersection of Robert and Ridge Streets;
4. Area on northwestern side of State Street between Railroad Crossing and Clay Street;
5. Area at end of Tremont Street; and
6. Area where Miller Avenue crosses the city limits.

The city should pursue the possibility of purchasing one or more of these sites for the development of a playground and/or neighborhood park facility. In addition, the city and county should cooperate with the

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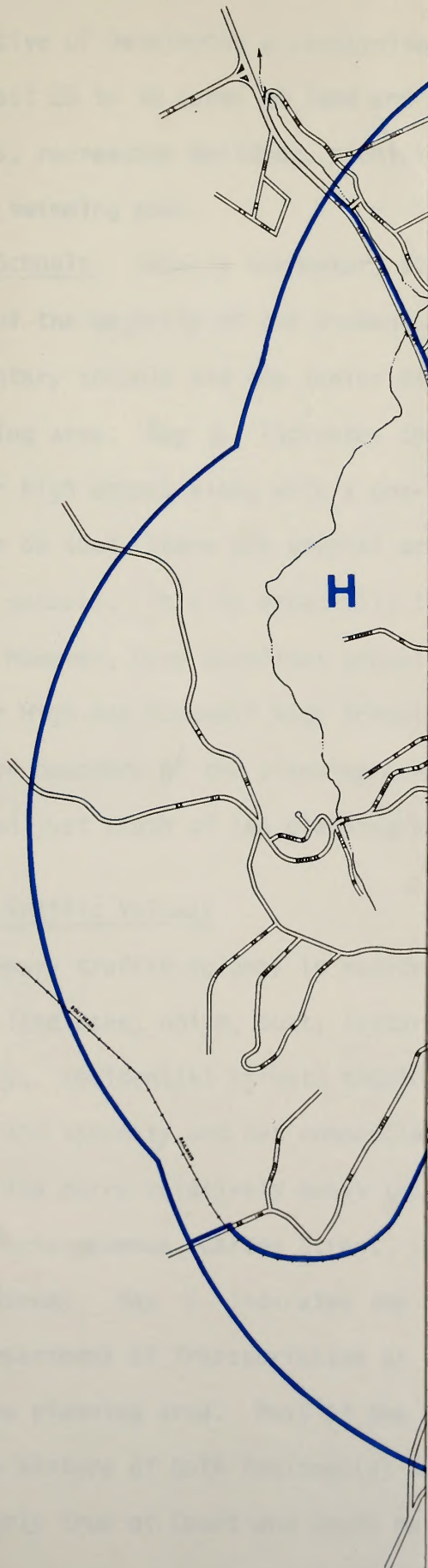
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ARION, NORTH CAROLINA



RECREATION AND POOL FACILITIES

END

DOOLS

OPERATIVE

NON-OPERATIVE

1/2 MILE RADIUS

KS and RECREATION AREAS

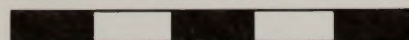
EXISTING PARK

POTENTIAL RECREATION AREAS

CE: Department of Natural and Economic Resources
Division of Community Assistance



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MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

MAP 10

RECREATION AND SCHOOL FACILITIES

LEGEND

SCHOOLS

▲ OPERATIVE

△ NON-OPERATIVE

○ ½ MILE RADIUS

PARKS and RECREATION AREAS

● EXISTING PARK

○ POTENTIAL RECREATION AREAS

SOURCE: Department of Natural and Economic Resources
Division of Community Assistance



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objective of developing a countywide recreation park. The park should include at least 20 to 30 acres of land and should contain tennis and basketball courts, recreation building, picnicking, night lighting, parking area and a large swimming pool.

Schools: Ideally elementary schools should be located within one-half mile of the majority of the students served by the schools. There are two elementary schools and one junior high school located within Marion and the planning area. Map 8 indicates the location of the two elementary and one junior high school along with a one-half mile radius drawn for each school. As can be seen, there are several areas which are not easily accessible to these schools. This is especially true of the West Marion section. Marion does, however, have excellent school facilities. In addition, McDowell Junior High and McDowell High Schools are located just outside the northwestern boundary of the planning area while West Marion Elementary School is located just south of the planning area on Sugar Hill Road.

Heavy Traffic Volumes

Heavy traffic volumes in residential areas are often indicative of mixed land uses, noise, dust, litter and generally unhealthy conditions. Ideally, residential streets should serve only those people living in the immediate vicinity and not commercial traffic. Several residential streets in Marion carry relatively heavy traffic volumes. Included in this list are Fleming Avenue, Garden Street, Court Street, Baldwin Avenue and South Main Street. Map 9 indicates the average 1975 daily traffic count by the Department of Transportation at points along certain streets in Marion and the planning area. Most of the streets with heavy traffic volumes contain a mixture of both residential and commercial land uses. This is particularly true of Court and South Main Streets.

objective of developing a communitywide recreation park. The park should include at least 20 to 30 acres of land and should contain tennis and basketball courts, recreation building, picnic area, night lighting, parking area and a large swimming pool.

Schools: Ideally elementary schools should be located within one-half mile of the majority of the students served by the schools. There are two elementary schools and one Junior High School located within the area and the planning area. Map 2 indicates the location of the two elementary and one Junior High School along with a one-half mile radius drawn for each school. As can be seen, there are several areas which are not easily accessible to these schools. This is especially true of the West Marion section. Marion does, however, have excellent school facilities. In addition, McGowan Junior High and McGowan High School are located just outside the north-western boundary of the planning area while West Marion Elementary School is located just south of the planning area on Sugar Hill Road.

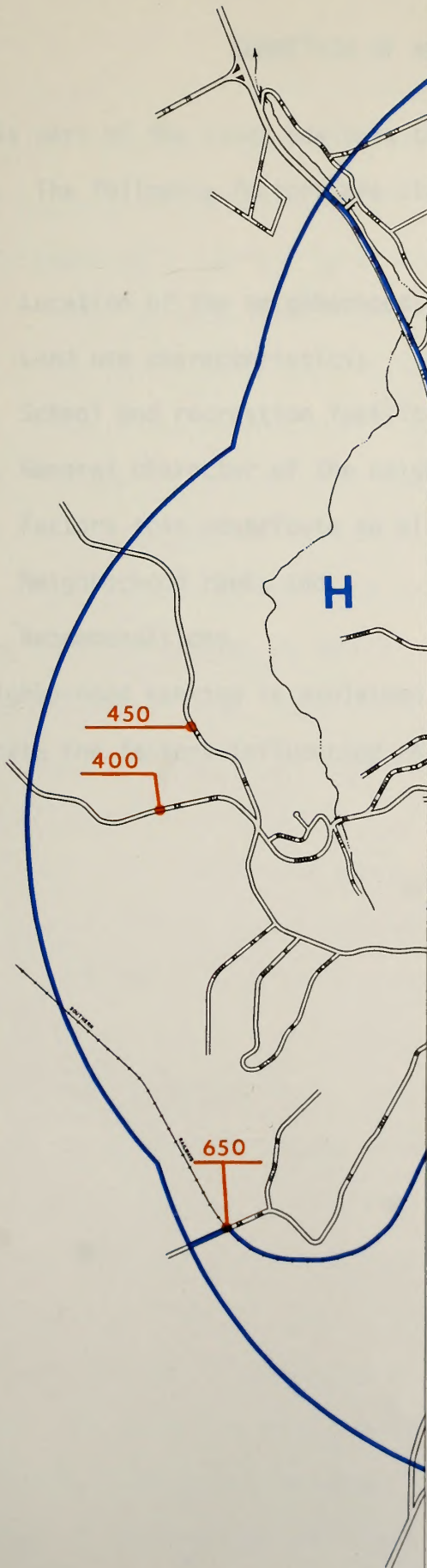
Heavy Traffic Volume

Heavy traffic volume in residential areas are often indicative of mixed land uses, noise, dust, faster and generally unsteady conditions. Ideally, residential streets should serve only those people living in the immediate vicinity and not commercial traffic. Several residential streets in Marion carry relatively heavy traffic volume. Included in this list are Fleming Avenue, Garden Street, Court Street, Belmont Avenue and South Main Street. Map 3 indicates the average 1955 daily traffic count by the Department of Transportation at points along certain streets in Marion and the planning area. Most of the streets which carry heavy traffic volume contain a mixture of both residential and commercial land uses. This is particularly true of Court and South Main Streets.

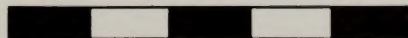
ARION, ORTH CAROLINA

ORAGE DAILY TRAFFIC UME, 1975

E:North Carolina Department of Transportation



0 800 1600 2400 3200 4000



SCALE IN FEET

objective of developing a comprehensive recreation park. The park should include at least 20 to 30 acres of land and should contain tennis and basketball courts, recreation building, picknick, night lighting, parking area and a large swimming pool.

Schools: Ideally elementary schools should be located within one-half mile of the majority of the students served by the schools. There are two elementary schools and one Junior High School located within Marion and the planning area. Map 2 indicates the location of the two elementary and one Junior High School along with a one-half mile radius drawn for each school. As can be seen, there are several areas which are not easily accessible to these schools. This is especially true of the West Marion section. Marion does, however, have excellent school facilities. In addition, Melrose Junior High and Melrose High Schools are located just outside the northern western boundary of the planning area while West Marion Elementary School is located just south of the planning area on Sugar Hill Road.

Heavy Traffic Volume

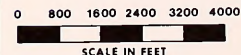
Heavy traffic volume in residential areas are often indicative of mixed land uses, noise, dust, litter and generally unhealthy conditions. Ideally, residential streets should serve only those people living in the immediate vicinity and not commercial traffic. Several residential streets in Marion carry relatively heavy traffic volume. Included in this list are Fleming Avenue, Garden Street, Court Street, Marion Avenue and South Main Street. Map 2 indicates the average 15th daily traffic count by the Department of Transportation at points along certain streets in Marion and the planning area. Most of the streets with heavy traffic volume contain a mixture of both residential and commercial land uses. This is particularly true of Court and South Main Streets.

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

MAP 11

AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUME, 1975

SOURCE: North Carolina Department of Transportation





CONDITION OF NEIGHBORHOODS

This part of the study analyzes the general conditions within the neighborhood. The following factors are discussed in connection with each neighborhood.

1. Location of the neighborhood;
2. Land use characteristics;
3. School and recreation facilities;
4. General character of the neighborhood;
5. Factors that contribute to blight;
6. Neighborhood rank; and
7. Recommendations.

Neighborhood ranking is explained on page 87 and Table 22 is provided to indicate the factors influencing rank.

Neighborhood A

Neighborhood A is located in the southern part of the City. It is bounded on the west by West Henderson Street, on the north by the railroad, on the east by Main Street and on the south by the city limits.

Overall Neighborhood A is a nice residential area. The residential desirability of the neighborhood is evidenced in part by the fact that several relatively expensive new houses have been built here during the past few years. This construction has occurred primarily along Forest Heights Drive, Glenview Street and Holly Hill Drive. With a number of lots still available residential construction will continue in this area. Several substandard houses are located on Holly Hill Drive near its intersection with West Henderson Street. Also located at this intersection is a small industrial plant. However, these land uses are fairly well buffered from the nicer homes in this area and no spreading of blight is foreseen. Commercial development is located along Railroad and Main Streets. However, this development is fairly well buffered from the surrounding residential area. The area along Main Street from the railroad south and east to Claremont Avenue is changing rather rapidly from residential to commercial use. Some of the older homes along Main Street have been converted into business uses. This trend should continue and spread farther out Main Street. Other houses along Main Street (past Claremont) are also beginning to deteriorate. Considering the heavy amount of traffic and the age and condition of many of the houses in this area, a general decline will probably occur unless positive steps are taken to upgrade the deteriorated houses.

All the streets are paved. The neighborhood contains no school or recreation facilities. Although the terrain is relatively steep, the area bordering on the northern side of Morgan Street between Crawford Street and Claremont Avenue might possibly be landscaped and developed into a small recreation area with playground and picnic facilities. The neighborhood is located between

two heavily travelled streets (West Henderson and South Main) however, no heavily travelled street cuts through the neighborhood. With continued vigorous building code and zoning enforcement, no significant deterioration should occur in Neighborhood A.

Neighborhood A has the following factors that contribute to blight:

1. Fifty percent of Marion's illegitimate births. This is 1.265 per 100 occupied dwelling units.
2. Almost twelve percent of the houses are substandard.
3. Houses are beginning to deteriorate along South Main Street.
4. Seven percent of Marion's adult crimes against persons and property. This is 5.063 crime per 100 occupied dwelling units.
5. Fifteen percent of Marion's vehicle and pedestrian accidents.

Neighborhood Rank: The incorporated area neighborhoods are ranked 1-6.

Neighborhood A is ranked 2. One is the least blighted and six is the most blighted.

Neighborhood B

Neighborhood B is located in the western part of the city. It is bounded on the west by the city limits. On the north by the city limits and North Main Street, on the east by Main Street and the Downtown district and on the south by the railroad and West Henderson Street.

Much of Neighborhood B is in a generally deteriorated condition. Over thirty-seven percent of the houses are substandard. This is a larger percentage than any other neighborhood in the city. Most of the substandard housing is located in the area between Tate and Carson Streets. The city should take steps immediately to upgrade these houses through zoning, building codes and other city ordinances. Otherwise, this could easily become an area of spreading blight. Approximately ten dilapidated houses are located between Tate and Carson Streets. All of these should be demolished whenever relocation housing becomes available. A vacant dilapidated house located on West Court Street should be demolished immediately. About one-third of the neighborhood is occupied by Broyhill and Cross Mill industries. To ensure greater protection to the surrounding residential property additional buffering is needed around both industries. The old Junior High School located on West Court Street is vacant and in a very deteriorated condition. This old building could easily become the hang-out place for drunks and encourage various types of undesirable activity, thus, downgrading the area around the school for residential purposes. The school building should be either completely renovated and used for some worthwhile purpose such as a community building, office space, YMCA, etc. or demolished with the land developed into a city or county-wide recreation park with tennis courts, picnic facilities, playground equipment and swimming pool.

Continued deterioration of this neighborhood will most likely occur unless a major effort is made by the City to halt the spread of blight through strict enforcement of building codes, zoning and other applicable City codes.

The only unpaved street in Neighborhood B is a small section of Catawba Street. Recreation facilities located in the neighborhood include the city owned park between Main and Logan Streets. Located here are tennis courts, community building, limited picnic facilities and playground equipment. A church owned playground is located on Fort Street between Main and Logan Streets. A ballfield is located at the old Junior High School. In addition, a small playground is located behind the McDowell Arts Center on Tate Street. There are no currently used schools in Neighborhood B. The intersection of Tate and Pinnacle Streets is very hazardous. West Court Street is the only heavily travelled street in this Neighborhood.

Neighborhood B has the following factors that contribute to blight:

1. Thirty seven point one percent (37.1%) of the houses are substandard.
2. Twenty eight percent (28%) of Marion's adult crimes against persons and property. This is 10.877 crimes per 100 occupied dwelling units.
3. Thirty percent (30%) of Marion's school dropouts. This amounts to 1.403 dropouts per 100 occupied dwelling unit.
4. Sixty percent (60%) of Marion's reported venereal disease cases. This is 2.105 cases per 100 occupied dwelling unit.
5. Twenty five percent (25%) of Marion's illegitimate births. This is .350 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.

6. Sixty three percent (63%) of Marion's vehicle and pedestrian accidents. This is 23.2 accidents per 100 occupied dwelling units.
7. Eighteen percent (18%) of Marion's residential fires. This is .73 fires per 100 occupied dwelling units.
8. Sixteen percent (16%) of Marion's unpaved street mileage.
9. A relatively large concentration of dilapidated houses between Carson and Tate Streets.
10. The unsightly school building located on Court Street.
11. West Court Street contains mixed land use and is heavily travelled.
12. The Broyhill Plant is not adequately buffered from the surrounding residential areas.

Neighborhood Rank: The incorporated area neighborhoods are ranked 1-6.

Neighborhood B is ranked 6. One is the least blighted and six is the most blighted.

Neighborhood C

Neighborhood C is located in the northern part of the city and is bounded on the west and north by the city limits and Main Street, on the east by Fleming Avenue and on the south by East Fort Street.

Overall Neighborhood C is a very nice residential area. Most of the neighborhood consists of older homes that have been preserved very well, beautiful yards and tree lined streets. No significant deterioration of this neighborhood is foreseen. The neighborhood has the second largest percentage of standard housing of any of the neighborhoods studied with almost ninety percent (90%) being classified as such. However, there are a few deteriorating houses on Fleming Avenue. The city should encourage the owners to upgrade these houses to help prevent deterioration from spreading to the other houses along Fleming Avenue. Vigorous building code enforcement should continue to insure that this neighborhood remains a pleasant residential area. There are no railroads or other incompatible land uses here. Several multi-family (duplex and apartment) buildings are located in Neighborhood C. Care should be taken by the city to insure that these rental buildings do not deteriorate as often happens with rental property.

There are .16 miles of unpaved streets in the neighborhood which is more than any other neighborhood studied. Several blind intersections are located in the neighborhood. The two worst ones being at Viewpoint and Crescent and at Crescent Avenue and North Fleming Street. The city has installed mirrors at both of these intersections to enable drivers to see traffic approaching around the curves. This is an excellent idea. A study should be conducted to determine where mirrors would increase visibility at other blind intersections within the city. There are no heavily travelled through streets in

this area. No recreational facilities are located in the neighborhood, however, there is easy access to the city park located on North Logan Street. An area on Monte-Vista Avenue north of its intersection with Fern Avenue would be a good location for a small park consisting of playground and picnic facilities. No school facilities are located in the neighborhood. Almost all of Neighborhood C is developed for residential use.

Neighborhood C has the following factors that contribute to blight:

1. Eleven point eight percent (11.8%) of the houses are substandard.
2. Twenty-five percent (25%) of Marion's reported adult crimes against persons and property. This is .952 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.
3. Fifty three percent (53%) of Marion's unpaved street mileage.
4. Seven percent (7%) of Marion's vehicle and pedestrian accidents.

This amounts to twenty accidents per 100 occupied dwelling units.

Neighborhood Rank: The incorporated area neighborhoods are ranked 1-6.

Neighborhood C is ranked 1. One is the least blighted and six is the most blighted.

Neighborhood D

Neighborhood D is located in the northeastern part of the city and is bounded on the north by Yancey Road and the city limits, on the east by the city limits, on the south by the railroad and on the west by Main Street and Fleming Avenue.

Neighborhood D is basically a nice residential area with over eighty-three (83%) of the houses classified as standard. However, there are definite signs of deterioration beginning to appear. The lot on the north east corner of the intersection of Turner Street and Park Avenue contains a deteriorated house and a yard filled with junk automobiles, appliances, etc. Several other houses in this immediate area are beginning to deteriorate. Unless this intersection is cleaned up, by enforcing applicable city codes, deterioration will spread to other houses in the immediate vicinity and initiate a general decline of an area that would otherwise be a nice residential neighborhood. A nice, well maintained apartment complex is located on Park Avenue. Several houses on Court and Maple Streets are beginning to deteriorate. Necessary steps should be taken either by the owners or by the city to upgrade these houses to insure that deterioration does not spread to adjacent property. A junk steel yard located on Nancy Tolly Street in the middle of a residential area should be phased out as soon as possible. Most of the commercial development in the neighborhood is confined to Court Street and is generally well buffered from the residential areas. Eventually the same process will occur on East Court Street that is presently occurring on Main Street--many of the older houses will gradually be converted to business uses as the residential uses are phased out. All of the area between East Court Street and the railroad should be reserved for commercial and industrial uses. Being located between a heavily travelled street and a railroad, this property is not suited for residential development.

Neighborhood D contains no unpaved streets. Marion Elementary School is located in this neighborhood and offers a limited amount of recreation facilities including swings, slides, a ballfield and an indoor basketball court. There are no other recreational facilities located in this neighborhood. The lot on the corner of Robert and Ridge Streets could be developed into a playground or other type of recreational use. A vacant lot located on Azalia Street just west of its intersection with McDowell Avenue would be suitable for development into a small park. In addition, the vacant lot at the corner of Robert Street and Yancey Road would be suitable for development into a small park.

Neighborhood D has the following factors that contribute to blight:

1. Almost fourteen percent (14%) of the houses are substandard.
2. Thirty nine percent (39%) of Marion's adult crimes against persons and property. This is 18.220 crimes per 100 occupied dwelling units.
3. Thirty percent (30%) of Marion's school dropouts. This amounts to 1.694 dropouts per 100 occupied dwelling units.
4. Ten percent (10%) of Marion's reported venereal diseases. This is .423 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.
5. Twenty six percent (26%) of Marion's vehicle and pedestrian accidents. This is 29.5 accidents per 100 occupied dwelling units.
6. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of Marion's residential fires. This is 1.4 fires per 100 occupied dwelling units.

7. A junk steel yard in a residential area on Nancy Tolly Road.
8. An unsightly kept house and yard at the corner of Turner Ridge Street and Park Avenue.
9. Mixed land use along Court Street which is heavily travelled.

Neighborhood Rank: The incorporated area neighborhoods are ranked 1-6.

Neighborhood D is ranked 5. One is the least blighted and six is the most blighted.

Neighborhood E

Neighborhood E is located in the eastern part of the city and is bounded on the north by the railroad, on the east by the city limits and on the south and west by the railroad.

Neighborhood E contains a newly developed residential area at the end of McDowell Avenue. Approximately twelve houses have recently been constructed here with approximately fourteen building lots still available. These houses are relatively expensive and add greatly to the appearance of the whole neighborhood. This construction indicates, in part, the residential desirability of this area. Several deteriorating houses are located between State Street and the railroad. In addition, there are some deteriorating houses located on Tate Street just outside the city limits. These houses have generally junky and unkept yards. A dilapidated house is located at the end of Tate Street. This area outside the city limits is mentioned here only to point out the fact that this whole section between State Street and the railroad could easily become an area of deteriorating houses if corrective steps are not soon taken to upgrade the existing substandard houses. Strict building code enforcement should be exercised in this area. The southern part of Neighborhood E, in the general area of Miller and Alabama Avenue, contains approximately six dilapidated houses, two of which are vacant and should be immediately demolished. This general area also contains several deteriorating houses and several mobile homes, all located near the railroad. Strict building code enforcement should be enforced in this area near the railroad to prevent blighting conditions from spreading to other areas of the neighborhood. There is very little commercial use in Neighborhood E. An industrial plant is located on Clay Street at the railroad. However, the plant is well

buffered and does not detract from the residential area.

Neighborhood E contains only a very small amount of unpaved streets just off McDowell Avenue. State Street is heavily travelled but does not contain any commercial or industrial uses in the neighborhood. East McDowell Junior High School occupies a large tract of land on State Street. Good recreational facilities are provided at the school including a large gymnasium, football stadium, ballfield, wrestling room and four tennis courts. Two lots located on the corner of Tremont Street and Euclide Avenue appear to be suitable for development as a small park. In addition, a vacant lot which is for sale on Miller Avenue east of Alabama could be easily landscaped and developed into a nice recreational area. A large lot on State Street north of the railroad crossing would be an ideal location for a city or county-wide park. The lot is relatively level, adequately large for a major park, sidewalks are already located here, the site is easily accessible and close to the downtown area. Another suitable location for a park and recreation area would be along Miller Avenue just outside the city limits. This site now contains a collection of junk automobiles. The land is level, easily accessible and is large enough to accommodate a county-wide recreation park. With continued vigorous building code enforcement Neighborhood E should remain a nice residential area.

Neighborhood E has the following factors that contribute to blight:

1. Almost eighteen percent (18%) of the houses are substandard.
2. Twenty three percent (23%) of Marion's school dropouts. This is 1.304 dropouts per 100 occupied dwelling units.
3. Twenty three percent (23%) of Marion's unpaved streets.
4. Ten percent (10%) of Marion's reported cases of venereal diseases. This is .434 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.

5. Eighteen percent (18%) of Marion's residential fires. This is .9 fires per 100 occupied dwelling units.
6. Nineteen percent (19%) of Marion's adult crimes against persons and property. This amounts to 9.130 accidents per 100 occupied dwelling units.
7. State Street is relatively heavily travelled.
8. Junk automobiles are located on a lot on Miller Avenue at the city limits.
9. Residential area inadequately buffered from railroad.

Neighborhood Rank: The incorporated area neighborhoods are ranked 1-6.

Neighborhood E is ranked 3. One is the least blighted and six is the most blighted.

Neighborhood F

Neighborhood F is located in the southeastern part of the city and is bounded on the north and east by the railroad and on the south and west by Main Street and U. S. Highway 221.

Neighborhood F contains a mixture of residential, commercial and industrial land uses. The northern part of the neighborhood is sandwiched between two railroads and is adjacent to the downtown area. It is beginning to deteriorate as a residential area and land use is changing from residential to commercial and industrial. This residential deterioration could easily expand into the rest of Neighborhood F if the city does not vigorously enforce its building code and zoning ordinance. When land use in an area begins to change from residential to commercial and/or industrial the desirability of the area for residential purposes rapidly deteriorates. Most of the deteriorating sections of Neighborhood F is located along Spring, State and South Madison Streets. South Madison Street contains the remains of a burned house which should be immediately demolished. An abandoned automobile is also located on this same lot and should be removed. Several houses along Spring Street are beginning to deteriorate. The city should encourage residents in this vicinity to upgrade their property and should enforce the building codes to correct any violations that occur. A vacant dilapidated house located at the corner of Spring Street and Lincoln Avenue should be immediately demolished. The houses along State Street just east of Garden Street are adjacent to an industrial plant. There is a lack of buffering between these two types of land use. Several multi-family dwelling units are located in Neighborhood F. The city should keep a check on these buildings to insure they do not deteriorate as often happens with rental property. A dilapidated building on State

Street near the railroad should be demolished. Some industrial property is located on Virginia Avenue near U. S. Highway 221 which should be adequately buffered from the surrounding residential units.

There are no schools or recreation facilities located in Neighborhood F. A vacant lot on State Street between the creek and the railroad would be a good location for a recreation park. The only unpaved street is a very short section at the end of Tennessee Avenue.

Neighborhood F has the following factors that contribute to blight:

1. Over twenty-five percent (25%) of the houses are substandard.
2. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of Marion's residential fires. This is 1.5 fires per 100 occupied dwelling units.
3. Sixteen percent (16%) of Marion's vehicle and pedestrian accidents. This is 19.7 accidents per 100 occupied dwelling units.
4. Twenty percent (20%) of Marion's reported cases of venereal disease. This is .913 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.
5. Fifteen percent (15%) of Marion's school dropouts.
6. State Street is heavily travelled and contains mixed land uses.
7. Inadequate buffering of industrial property from residential property.
8. Residential area inadequately buffered from railroad.

Neighborhood Rank: The incorporated area neighborhoods are ranked 1-6.

Neighborhood F is ranked 4. One is the least blighted and six is the most blighted.

Neighborhood G

Neighborhood G is located in the planning area south of the City. It is bounded on the north by the city limits and a creek, and on the east and south by the planning area boundary and on the west by the railroad.

Overall Neighborhood G is in a rather deteriorated condition. Approximately thirty seven percent (37%) of the houses are substandard. The largest concentration of substandard houses is located between Sugar Hill Road and the railroad north of State Road (S.R.) 1170. This is a predominantly Black area. A vacant dilapidated house on High Street should be immediately demolished as should the remains of a burned house on Hudgins Street. Both of these structures pose health and safety hazards especially for young children who play in this area. In addition there are several other occupied dilapidated houses that should be demolished as soon as relocation housing becomes available. This section of Neighborhood G will probably continue to deteriorate unless strong corrective action is soon taken. This action would include enforcement of strict building codes and zoning and the adequate provision for the disposal of sewerage. Signs of deterioration are beginning to appear in other parts of Neighborhood G, although not to the extent of the section previously discussed. There are two large mobile home parks, containing a total of approximately 40 mobile homes, and one apartment complex located in this neighborhood. If building codes and zoning are not enforced a general decline will continue causing many of the standard houses to deteriorate. With efforts on the part of the city and/or county most of Neighborhood G could become a nice residential area. If left alone, however, blight will probably continue to spread.

Catawba, Mitchell and parts of Woodlawn and Wilehemenia Streets are unpaved. All of these streets should be paved. The installation of curb and

gutter on all the streets between and including Hudgins and Sugar Hill Road would improve the drainage in this densely developed area. There are no schools or recreation facilities located in this neighborhood. Most of the neighborhood is either open space or residential with only a small scattering of commercial sites. Sugar Hill Road is the only heavily travelled road in the neighborhood.

Neighborhood G has the following factors that contribute to blight:

1. Over thirty-six percent (36%) of the houses are substandard.
2. Sixteen percent (16%) of the planning area's unpaved streets.
3. Eighteen percent (18%) of the planning area's residential fires. This is 1.1 fires per 100 occupied dwelling units.
4. Forty two percent (42%) of the planning area's reported illegitimate births. This is .589 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.
5. Five percent (5%) of the planning area's reported cases of venereal diseases. This is .196 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.
6. Fourteen percent (14%) of the planning area's school drop-outs. This is .982 dropouts per 100 occupied dwelling units.
7. Thirty three percent (33%) of the planning area's reported tuberculosis cases. This is .392 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.
8. Lack of adequate land use and building controls.
9. Lack of adequate sewerage treatment in some areas.

Neighborhood Rank: The planning area neighborhoods are ranked 1-4. One is the least blighted and four is the most blighted. Neighborhood G is ranked 3.

Neighborhood H

Neighborhood H is located west of the City in the planning area. It is bounded on the east by the city limits, on the north by U. S. Highway 70, on the west by the planning area boundary and on the south by the railroad.

Parts of Neighborhood H are beginning to deteriorate. Two unpaved roads leading off of Reservoir Road just outside the city limits contain mostly substandard housing, two of which are dilapidated and vacant and should, therefore, immediately be demolished. The lots on both streets are in a generally junky and unkept condition. Both streets should be paved. State Road 1209 is unpaved and very steep near its entrance into the city. This could prove to be very dangerous especially for emergency vehicles such as fire trucks. The street should be re-graded to a smaller slope and paved. A lot located at the intersection of State Road 1197 and State Road 1200 contains various types of junk and should be cleaned up. Green Street and Hill-top Drive contain a large concentration of substandard houses and mobile homes. Considering the density of development, this area should be given high priority from any program designed to deal with the problems of blight. Otherwise, blighting conditions will easily spread to other houses in this immediate area. Valley Street and Old Greenlee Road should be paved. The area on the short segment of old U. S. Highway 221 contains an industrial plant with unkept and generally junky surroundings. Most of the area along U. S. Highway 221 is lined with commercial uses offering nice shopping facilities. Located behind the Lady Marion Shopping Center is a nice residential subdivision and apartment complex.

There are no schools or recreation facilities located in Neighborhood H. From general appearance, it is obvious that the neighborhood lacks building codes and zoning enforcement. Unless these regulations are applied in this

area the neighborhood will most likely deteriorate in the future. The area is currently being served by city water but not city sewer. Considering the density of development in many parts of Neighborhood H, a hookup to the city sewer system is needed. There are two Valley Streets in the neighborhood. One of the street names should be changed as street name duplication could prove tragic in an emergency situation.

Neighborhood H has the following factors that contribute to blight:

1. Over thirty percent (30%) of the houses are substandard.
2. Twenty-one percent (21%) of the planning area's unpaved streets.
3. Twenty-two percent (22%) of the planning area's residential fires. This is 1.4 fires per 100 occupied dwelling units.
4. Sixteen percent (16%) of the planning area's illegitimate births. This is .226 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.
5. Ten percent (10%) of the planning area's reported cases of venereal diseases. This is .453 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.
6. Twenty nine percent (29%) of the planning area's school dropouts. This is 2.267 dropouts per 100 occupied dwelling units.
7. The area lacks adequate building and land use controls.
8. The area lacks an adequate public sewerage system.

Neighborhood Rank: The planning area neighborhoods are ranked 1-4. One is the least blighted and four is the most blighted. Neighborhood H is ranked 2.

Neighborhood I

Neighborhood I is located in the northern part of the planning area.

It is bounded on the south by the city limits, on the north and east by the planning area boundary and on the west by U. S. Highway 70.

Most of the northwestern part of Neighborhood I is only sparsely developed. The houses in this area are in good condition with two exceptions: Jackson Road (State Road 1507), which intersects Airport Road, is unpaved and contains several substandard houses. Two of these houses are vacant and dilapidated and, consequently, should be demolished as soon as possible.

An unnamed road intersecting with Garden Creek Road is also unpaved and contains several substandard houses, one of which is dilapidated and vacant.

The northeastern part of Neighborhood I is much more densely developed with a mixture of residential, commercial and industrial use. Deterioration is beginning to occur in this area. Considering the density of development, it would be easy for deterioration to spread to other houses and initiate a

further decline of this area. Most of the substandard houses are located on Virginia Avenue, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th Streets and the area bounded by School Street and Church Street. There are approximately seven vacant

dilapidated houses on Virginia Avenue, all of which should be immediately demolished. Many of the yards in this area are not well maintained and display a generally untidy and junky appearance, further contributing to

blighting factors. Several junk cars located at the northern end of Virginia Avenue should be removed or adequately screened from surrounding

residences. The whole northeastern section of Neighborhood I would definitely benefit from strict enforcement of building codes and zoning. At the present time, building codes are the most urgently needed since many of the houses are already in a substandard condition. Additional buffering

around the Clinchfield Plant would help to improve the appearance of the area immediately around the industry. Part of the neighborhood is served by the Clinchfield Sewer System which was taken over by the City of Marion in 1974. Most of the neighborhood is also served by city water.

The only recreation areas in the neighborhood are two ballfields, one located next to the Clinchfield Industrial Plant and one at the old Clinchfield Elementary School which is now for sale. Since the Clinchfield School has been closed there are no school facilities in the neighborhood. However, McDowell Junior High and McDowell High School are both located just outside the planning area. Recreation facilities are provided at these two schools. There are several unpaved roads in the neighborhood including Jackson Road, Robinson Road, part of Forsyth Street and State Road 1582. All of these streets should be paved. U. S. Highway 70-221 is the only heavily travelled through street in the neighborhood. However very few residences face this road.

Neighborhood I has the following factors that contribute to blight:

1. Over thirty percent (30%) of the houses are substandard.
2. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of the planning area's unpaved streets.
3. Twenty nine percent (29%) of the planning area's residential fires. This is 1.2 fires per 100 occupied dwelling units.
4. Twenty-one percent (21%) of the planning area's reported cases of venereal diseases. This is .556 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.
5. Fourteen percent (14%) of the planning area's school drop-outs. This is .695 dropouts per 100 occupied dwelling units.

6. Thirty-three percent (33%) of the planning area's reported cases of tuberculosis. This is .278 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.
7. The area lacks adequate building and land use controls to handle present and future developments.
8. U. S. Highway 70-221 is heavily travelled.
9. Some yards are junky and are in a generally unkept condition.

Neighborhood Rank: The planning area neighborhoods are ranked 1-4. One is the least blighted and four is the most blighted. Neighborhood I is ranked 1.

Neighborhood J

Neighborhood J is located east of the City in the planning area. It is bounded on the north by the railroad, on the east by the planning area boundary, on the south by a creek and on the west by the city limits.

Of all the neighborhoods studied in the planning area, Neighborhood J is by far the most densely developed. Based on the number of housing units counted in the survey for this report and the average number of people per household in 1970 for McDowell County according to the U. S. Census, it is estimated that slightly over 2,500 people live in Neighborhood J. In addition, Neighborhood J is the most deteriorated of any neighborhood studied including those inside the city. Over fifty-two percent (52%) of the houses are substandard. This is a larger percentage than in any of the other neighborhoods studied. There are seventy dilapidated houses in the neighborhood, fourteen of which are vacant and should be immediately demolished. The remains of two burned houses are located on Circle Street and Leach Street. Most of the neighborhood is served by the city water system and some parts are served by a system of collection sewers which are owned and operated by Marion Manufacturing Company. Considering the density of development in this neighborhood, a more adequate system of municipal water and sewer service is urgently needed for both public health and safety. There are several "pockets" of concentrated deteriorating housing. These include the areas around Ridge and Circle Streets, Morehead and West 4th Street, Railroad and State Streets, Morris and Yancey Streets and Tunnel Street. There are ten unpaved streets in this neighborhood. All of these unpaved streets should be paved, including curb and guttering. Miller Avenue Extension contains several lots filled with junk cars, appliances, etc. These lots should be cleaned up and landscaped. A large junk yard on Miller Avenue Extension

should either be removed or adequately buffered from the surrounding residential area. A lot on Roberta Street is also accumulating various types of unsightly junk which should be removed. The large industrial plant located between Morehead Road and Baldwin Avenue needs to be more adequately buffered from the surrounding houses. There is an urgent need for the enforcement of building codes and zoning and for the adequate provision of water and sewer and other municipal services. Otherwise, this whole neighborhood will continue to deteriorate until it reaches the point where full scale urban renewal will be the only way to alleviate blight.

The new Eastfield Elementary School is located in Neighborhood J. The school contains a lighted baseball field with bleachers. A ballfield is being constructed on Baldwin Avenue next to the old East Marion Elementary School. There are no other schools or recreation areas in Neighborhood J. However, a large lot on Miller Street Extension could be cleaned up and developed into a recreation area. The lot now contains several junk cars and a burned mobile home. Rutherfordton Road and Baldwin Avenue are relatively heavily travelled.

Neighborhood J has the following factors that contribute to blight:

1. Over fifty-two percent (52%) of the houses are substandard.
2. Thirty-four percent (34%) of the planning area's unpaved roads.
3. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the planning area's residential fires. This is 1.0 fires per 100 occupied dwelling units.
4. Forty-two percent (42%) of the planning area's reported illegitimate births. This .377 per 100 occupied dwelling units.
5. Sixty-three percent (63%) of the planning area's reported

cases of venereal disease. This is 1.511 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.

6. Forty-one percent (41%) of the planning area's school dropouts. This is 1.763 dropouts per 100 occupied dwelling units.
7. The area lacks adequate land use controls and other municipal services.
8. Rutherfordton Road and Baldwin Avenue are heavily travelled.
9. Several yards are in a junky and unkept condition.
10. Thirty-three percent (33%) of the planning area's reported cases of tuberculosis. This is .251 cases per 100 occupied dwelling units.

Neighborhood Rank: the planning area neighborhoods are ranked 1-4. One is the least blighted and four is the most blighted. Neighborhood J is ranked 4.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENT AND FUTURE DEMAND FOR HOUSING IN MARION

The concept of demand for housing implies the willingness and ability of households to pay for housing desired; that is what people are likely to do within the framework of present and future incomes, tastes, prices, rent, construction costs and mortgage terms. Housing market demand is considered to be made up of three distinct components:

1. Households: This component of the housing market demand includes the housing units needed to accommodate newly formed households, or those who leave units in which more than one family unit resided, or who came into the housing market from other places.
2. Replacement: In estimating housing demand, it is assumed that each unit withdrawn from the market will be replaced at some point during the projection period, though not necessarily at the same rent or price level.
3. Vacancies: The overall vacancy rate must be considered in the estimation of housing market potential. In projecting future housing demand the number of vacant units is not included but rather the figures simply represent the projected number of housing units that will need to be available for occupancy in the target years 1980 and 1990 by the various population categories. It is important to note that the projected figures do not necessarily indicate the number of housing units that will need to be built to meet the demand since occupancy

turnover and vacant units may be able to meet part of the demand.

The total of these three components of demand is the number of units which must be available over the projection period in order to satisfy the housing requirements of the population as of the end of that period.

Total Demand

Table 20 provides a breakdown of projected housing demand in 1980 and 1990 for various population segments. In terms of total demand there were 1,165 occupied housing units in 1970 in Marion. Using the 1970 U. S. Census figure of 2.8 persons per housing unit and the population projection contained in the City's Land Development Plan, a projected number of housing units was obtained. There were 1,165 occupied housing units in Marion in 1970. Projections indicate a need for 1,269 housing units in 1980 which is 104 more units than were occupied in 1970. 1990 figures indicate a need for 1,346 housing units. This is 181 more units than were occupied in 1970.

Occupancy Demand

Using the 1970 owner-renter occupancy ratio and the projected population a demand for owner and renter occupied units was projected for 1980 and 1990. In 1970 there were 700 owner-occupied housing units. Projections indicate a need for 761 owner-occupied units in 1980 which is 61 more than occupied in 1970. 1990 figures indicate a need for 808 owner-occupied units. This is 108 units more than were occupied in 1970.

In 1970, there were 465 renter-occupied units in Marion. Projections indicate a need for 508 renter-occupied units by 1980 which is 43 more than occupied in 1970. 1990 figures indicate a need for 538 renter-occupied units. This is 73 more than were occupied in 1970.

TABLE 20

PROJECTED HOUSING DEMAND*

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>
<u>Total Units</u>	1,165	1,269	1,346
<u>Additional Units over 1970</u>		104	181
<u>Owner</u>	700	761	808
<u>Increase Over 1970</u>		61	108
<u>Renter</u>	465	508	538
<u>Increase Over 1970</u>		43	73
<u>Elderly</u>	168	179	190
<u>Increase Over 1970</u>		11	22
<u>White</u>	1,160	1,264	1,340
<u>Increase Over 1970</u>		104	180
<u>Non-White</u>	5	5	6
<u>Increase Over 1970</u>		0	1

*All figures indicate occupied units.

Elderly Demand

Using the 1970 Census ratio of elderly population (65 years and over) to total population and the projected total population, a demand for elderly housing units in 1980 and 1990 was obtained by applying the same figure of 2.8 persons per housing unit in 1970 to the 1980 and 1990 projections. These figures indicate a need for 179 housing units by 1980 to house the elderly population. This figure is 11 more units than estimated in 1970. The 1990 figures indicate a need for 190 units which is 22 more than in 1970.

Demand by Race

Using the 1970 percentages of white and non-white households, a projected number of housing units necessary to house the white and non-white populations was obtained for 1980 and 1990 by using the 1970 figure of 2.8 persons per housing unit in Marion. Figures indicate a need for 1,264 units to house the white population in 1980. This is 104 units more than were occupied by whites in 1970. 1990 figures indicate a need for 1,340 units to house the white population. This is 180 more units than were occupied by whites in 1970.

1980 figures indicate a need for five units to house the non-white population. This represents no increase over 1970. 1990 figures indicate a need for six units to house the non-white population. This is one more than the 1970 figure.

Demand by Value and Rent

Based on 1970 family income and a Department of Housing and Urban Development and Farmer's Home Administration recommendation that a family spend a maximum of 25 percent of its income for housing, the projected number of families that could afford monthly payments in selected payment

TABLE 21

HOUSING PAYMENTS BASED ON FAMILY INCOME

<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>
Under \$20	3.0	29	31	33
\$ 20 - \$ 41	5.4	53	55	59
\$ 42 - \$ 62	3.2	31	33	35
\$ 63 - \$ 83	7.0	68	72	76
\$ 84 - \$ 104	7.1	69	73	77
\$ 105 - \$ 124	6.6	64	68	72
\$ 125 - \$ 145	8.7	84	89	95
\$ 146 - \$ 166	10.5	102	108	114
\$ 167 - \$ 187	7.1	69	73	77
\$ 188 - \$ 208	10.9	106	112	119
\$ 209 - \$ 249	10.6	103	109	115
\$ 250 - \$ 312	7.9	77	81	86
\$ 313 - \$ 520	6.2	60	64	68
\$ 521 - \$1,041	5.1	50	52	56
\$1,042 and over	0	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
		965	1,026	1,089

categories is projected for 1980 and 1990. It must be pointed out that these monthly payment figures are in terms of 1970 dollars. Therefore, in order to obtain more accurate figures, an inflation rate must be applied. See table 21 for detailed information.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis of Blight for Marion and the Planning Area

The preceding sections have indicated the degree of each blight factor in regard to each neighborhood. Although neighborhood rank has been mentioned, it has not been explained. Table 22, which succeeds this section, is a comparison of neighborhoods by selected characteristics. Most of the blight factors in Marion are indicated in this table and each neighborhood is ranked according to its degree of blight with respect to that factor when compared to the other neighborhoods. To determine the overall rank of any neighborhood one merely adds the ranks for each blight factor from substandard housing on the left to residential fires on the right. A rank of one is best and a rank of six is worst for the city neighborhoods and a rank of four is worst for the fringe neighborhoods. (The incorporated area neighborhoods are ranked separately from the fringe area for purposes of comparison).

Neighborhood Objectives and Goals

The consequences of blight are evident in several areas of the City and the planning area. It is important that the City act now in order to control and eliminate blighting factors before they spread. There is no easy method, no set formula by which a city can begin such a difficult task. Following are some suggested goals and objectives that might be utilized in Marion.

Housing

1. Home maintenance should be improved. Deteriorated housing could be improved through painting or repairs to roof, chimneys, windows, doors, steps, porches, floors, walls and other such items. The City might develop some sort of contest to spur home improvements.

2. Dilapidated housing should be removed when vacated. Strict code enforcement in many cities has worked favorably in this respect.
3. Vacant dilapidated nonresidential buildings not in use should be removed.

Economic

1. Encourage hiring of the handicapped in order to raise family incomes.
2. Encourage education as a means of upgrading salary levels and fostering a sense of pride in one's self.
3. Encourage high quality industry to locate in and near Marion so that more job opportunities can be available and the city can begin to diversify its economy.
4. Continue the attempt to obtain funding for public housing for families that cannot afford standard housing.
5. To foster a sense of pride which would result in better maintenance, families should be encouraged to buy homes rather than rent.
6. Make use of Federal funds to educate and to train the unemployed or underemployed and physically handicapped persons for better jobs. A possible source for Federal funding is the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education. Possible programs include the Economic Opportunity Act of 1965, Vocational Education Amendment of 1968, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and Cooperative Research Act. Additional and more specific information can be obtained from the regional office of HEW at: 50 Seventh Street, N. E., Room 404, Atlanta, Georgia 30323. As more skilled workers are available, it will be easier to attract industrial plants that provide higher paying jobs.

7. Citizens should be encouraged to make use of McDowell Technical Institute to improve their vocational abilities. This should be viewed as a viable alternative to a four year college education.
8. Interested citizens should be encouraged to seek small loans from the Federal government in order to help finance small businesses.

Environmental

1. Adopt and enforce codes and ordinances such as zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, building codes and housing codes in the planning area. Continue the active enforcement of zoning and building codes and begin to enforce subdivision regulations in the city.
2. Landscape public areas and encourage garden clubs to landscape vacant areas wherever possible.
3. Keep vacant lots free from weeds and trash.
4. Remove all old junk cars from residential areas.
5. Pave all streets within the corporate limits. This should include curb and gutters for adequate drainage.
6. Sidewalks should be provided in areas of heavy pedestrian traffic.
7. Elimination of residential nuisances such as noise and odor resulting from mixed land use in residential areas should be encouraged through the zoning ordinance.
8. Provide small recreation areas to serve the people in all neighborhoods.
9. To the extent possible, heavy traffic volume should be diverted from residential streets.
10. Adequate lighting should be provided along all residential streets in the corporate limits.

11. Buffers and parks should be provided to divide residential land use from commercial or industrial land use.
12. The city should encourage the support of a beautification commission composed of civic minded people who have the time and motivation to devote to such an organization. The commission could concentrate on various types of beautification campaigns, gardening projects, removal of junk automobiles and other such clean-up projects. The city should provide financial support to the commission in the purchase of shrubbery, trees, etc. The active participation of area residents in any clean-up project should be encouraged. This would help create a justifiable sense of pride from the act of participating in the completion of such projects.

Social

1. Control the advent and spread of disease through education campaigns.
2. Special grants should be obtained from the U. S. Public Health Service to provide for intensive community vaccination efforts and research work in communicable diseases, tuberculosis control and venereal disease.

Recommended Blight Control Program

It is not difficult to pinpoint most blighted areas in Marion. This study is intended to not only point out blighted areas but to indicate blighting factors so that more meaningful recommendations can be made for the elimination of blight. All blighting factors indicated should be considered in steps to eliminate blight. The degree of blighting factors present in each neighborhood is the basis on which proposed treatment areas are designated. There are three types of renewal treatment.

Conservation - Conservation is the method utilized for protecting neighborhoods that are not seriously blighted. Conservation action requires cooperation between local government officials and residents living in such areas. The aim of conservation action is to preserve and maintain the pleasing qualities of a neighborhood. Such preservation includes minor repairs, painting and landscaping. Some of the tools of conservation are local codes and ordinances and clean-up campaigns. Occasionally, rehabilitation is needed in a conservation area. Since conservation action checks blight before it begins, its importance to a city cannot be overstressed.

Rehabilitation - Rehabilitation action is the primary method for reviving an area that has begun to deteriorate. Often such neighborhoods have code violations and abundant substandard housing. It is only feasible to rehabilitate when such rehabilitation is cheaper or more practical than total clearance and reconstruction. Rehabilitation may involve demolition of parts of a neighborhood or it may involve public improvements such as street changes, water and sewer extensions and park additions.

Redevelopment - Redevelopment action is the last alternative to urban renewal. It is undertaken only when neighborhoods have reached a point of decay whereby it would be unrealistic to try to repair or revive them. Generally, such neighborhoods have mostly substandard housing, poor street design and high incidence of both social and environmental blight factors. Treatment of such areas consists of acquiring and removing all substandard structures and replotting the area. The reuse of redevelopment areas may be for any type use or even any combination of uses that fits the city's land development plan. A program of clearance of blighted housing to be effective must provide for the relocation of the inhabitants in suitable standard housing.

There is an immediate need for replacement of 30 dilapidated housing units in the city and 175 dilapidated units in the planning area. Relocation housing must be found for those people living in dilapidated units. Most of the housing in Marion being constructed by the private sector is fulfilling the demand created by middle and upper income families. Low income families have not had the resources necessary to enter this market without some form of assistance. This assistance has traditionally come from the Federal Government primarily from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Farmer's Home Administration. All assisted housing should be located in areas of adequate public service including water, sewer, street, and fire and police protection. Assisted housing should also be in conformity with the City's zoning ordinance and land development plans.

The Recommended Treatment Areas Map is presented in a general way. It should be followed up by more detailed surveys and analyses in these areas where problems are sorted out and in those areas recommended for redevelopment.

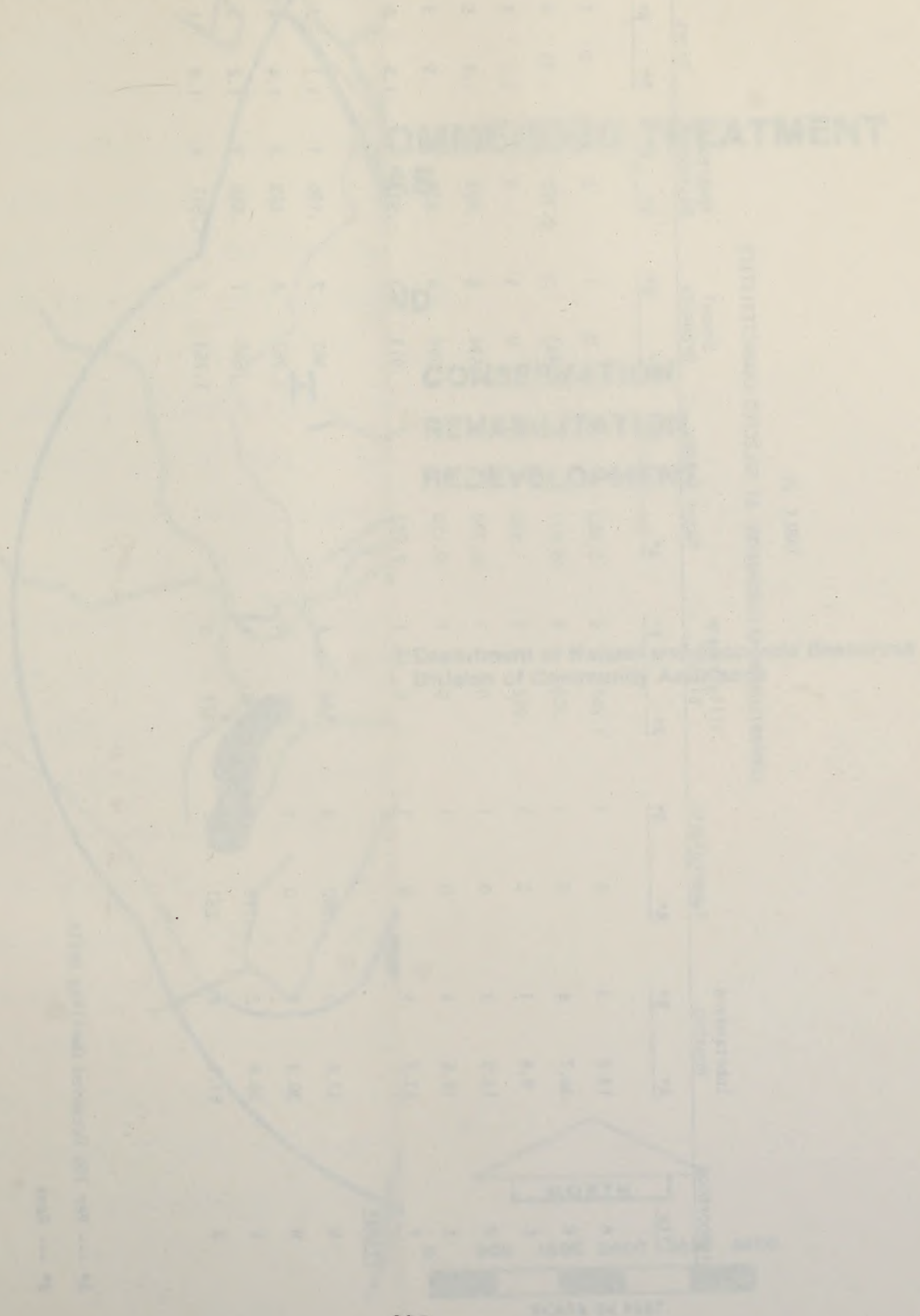


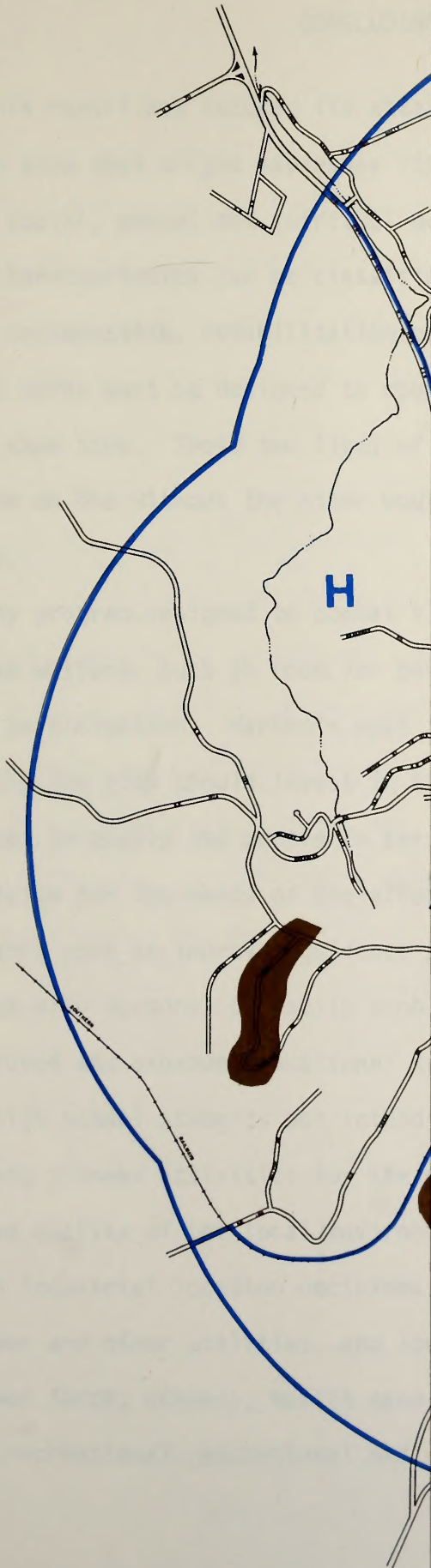
TABLE 22
COMPARISON OF NEIGHBORHOODS BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Neighborhood	Substandard Housing		Tuberculosis		Illigitimate Births		Major Crimes		School Dropouts		Venereal Disease		Fires		City		Fringe	
	A*	B*	A*	B*	A*	B*	A*	B*	A*	B*	A*	B*	A*	B*	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
A	13.8	3	0	1	1.265	6	5.063	3	0	1	0	1	0	1		2		
B	36.7	6	0	1	.350	4	10.877	5	1.403	5	2.105	6	.73	2		6		
C	9.4	1	0	1	.952	5	.952	1	0	1	0	1	1.1	4		1		
D	13.5	2	0	1	0	1	18.220	6	1.694	6	.423	3	1.4	5		5		
E	18.6	4	0	1	0	1	9.130	4	1.304	4	.434	4	.9	3		3		
F	23.2	5	0	1	0	1	2.283	2	.913	3	.913	5	1.5	6		4		
Fringe																		
G	37.6	3	.392	4	.589	4			.982	2	.196	1	1.1	2			3	
H	30.3	1	0	1	.226	2			2.267	4	.453	2	1.4	4			2	
I	30.8	2	.278	3	0	1			.695	1	.556	3	1.2	3			1	
J	53.1	4	.251	2	.377	3			1.763	3	1.511	4	1.0	1			4	

A* --- Per 100 Occupied Dwelling Units

B* --- Rank

ARION, NORTH CAROLINA



**COMMENDED TREATMENT
AS**

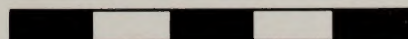
ND

**CONSERVATION
REHABILITATION
REDEVELOPMENT**

**E: Department of Natural and Economic Resources
Division of Community Assistance**



0 800 1600 2400 3200 4000



SCALE IN FEET

TABLE 22
COMPARISON OF NEIGHBORHOODS BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Neighborhood	Substandard Housing		Tuberculosis		Illigitimate Births		Major Crimes		School Dropouts		Venereal Disease		Fires		City		Fringe	
	A*	B*	A*	B*	A*	B*	A*	B*	A*	B*	A*	B*	A*	B*	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
A	13.8	3	0	1	1.265	6	5.063	3	0	1	0	1	0	1	2			
B	36.7	6	0	1	.350	4	10.877	5	1.403	5	2.105	6	.73	2	6			
C	9.4	1	0	1	.952	5	.952	1	0	1	0	1	1.1	4	1			
D	13.5	2	0	1	0	1	18.220	6	1.694	6	.423	3	1.4	5	5			
E	18.6	4	0	1	0	1	9.130	4	1.304	4	.434	4	.9	3	3			
F	23.2	5	0	1	0	1	2.283	2	.913	3	.913	5	1.5	6	4			
<u>Fringe</u>																		
G	37.6	3	.392	4	.589	4			.982	2	.196	1	1.1	2			3	
H	30.3	1	0	1	.226	2			2.267	4	.453	2	1.4	4			2	
I	30.8	2	.278	3	0	1			.695	1	.556	3	1.2	3			1	
J	53.1	4	.251	2	.377	3			1.763	3	1.511	4	1.0	1			4	

A* --- Per 100 Occupied Dwelling Units

B* --- Rank

MARION, NORTH CAROLINA

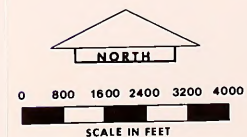
MAP 12

RECOMMENDED TREATMENT AREAS

LEGEND

-  CONSERVATION
-  REHABILITATION
-  REDEVELOPMENT

SOURCE: Department of Natural and Economic Resources
Division of Community Assistance





CONCLUDING REMARKS

This report has focused its attention on blight. An attempt has been made to show that blight expresses itself not only in physical deterioration but in social, mental and spiritual deterioration as well. These latter three characteristics can be classified as social blight. Any program geared to the conservation, rehabilitation or redevelopment of existing substandard housing units must be designed to counteract both physical and social blight at the same time. These two lines of attack are so interrelated that to concentrate on one without the other would be seriously deficient and doomed to failure.

Any program designed to combat blight must also be concerned with issues of human welfare, such as room for personal growth, economic opportunity and social participation. Marion's most important resource is its people. Consequently the city should invest in the improvement of personal skills and resources to enable its people to earn a productive place in the community, and provide for the needs of the elderly and sick. This investment can take many forms such as improved guidance and counseling of school dropouts, children with personal or family problems and unwed mothers, establishment of improved and expanded vocational training opportunities for adults and those high school students not intending to pursue a college education, and providing planned activities for the elderly.

The quality of the local environment is playing an increasingly important role in industrial location decisions. While the availability of land, water and sewer and other utilities, and low taxes are important, the quality of the labor force, schools, health care facilities and housing and the availability of recreational, educational and cultural opportunities, are becoming

increasingly significant in attracting new industry to an area. It is very important that Marion realize this. Without increased employment opportunities the community will lose its most productive citizens, the young people graduating from high school and college, to areas providing these opportunities.

The key issue in planning for comprehensive development is how best to interact with the larger problems of education, employment and systems of social institutions. These matters are especially difficult when these problems are acute and exhibit a tendency to perpetuate poverty and despair. While each of these has environmental aspects, the primary concentration must be in terms of program ingenuity, supporting legislation and financial aid. The focus, for example, in education is not the school plant, though it includes it. The focus is the program, the quality of the teaching and the ingenuity in reaching the children effectively and motivating them. The focus in employment is not the industrial area or transportation facilities, though it includes those as well. The focus is an advancing technology, consumption patterns, manpower development, trade or fiscal policies, and the elimination of discriminating practices. The focus on the system of social institutions is not the economically imbalanced community as much as it is the whole set of built-in attitudes which must be dealt with through political and social accommodations. Quality housing, good roads and better community facilities can be realized more effectively if we concentrate on assisting and motivating people to help themselves.

APPENDIX A

Environmental Considerations and Abstract

This Housing Element for Marion, North Carolina divides the City into six neighborhoods and the one-mile planning area into four neighborhoods for the purposes of study and comparison. Each neighborhood is described according to geographic boundaries and housing conditions. Social, economic and environmental conditions are studied for all neighborhoods within Marion. Conditions in the planning area are presented when data is readily available. In addition, each neighborhood is analyzed with respect to total blight and recommendations are made for the elimination or warding off of blight accordingly.

I. Housing Conditions

This study pinpoints areas of substandard (deteriorated and dilapidated) housing. Some of these houses are built on very steep slopes and other areas generally unsuited for residential development. The study recommends the demolition of all dilapidated housing when adequate relocation housing becomes available. This program would have a positive environmental effect in that it would provide for those now living in dilapidated housing a safer more decent place in which to live. This in turn would create a more positive attitude on the part of these individuals by fostering a greater sense of pride in themselves, their homes and their community. In addition, the appearance of the landscape will be improved with the removal of these dilapidated houses. Several adequate sites exist in Marion and the planning area for relocation housing. The study also recommends fix-up campaigns on deteriorated housing and an active building code enforcement program. While incurring some expense on the part of individual home owners, this program would nevertheless prevent the spread of substandard housing.

II. Economic Conditions

The study recommends several programs to improve family incomes, including a better utilization of McDowell Technical Institute, especially for those who do not want or cannot afford to attend a four year college, an attempt to diversify the local economy by attracting good paying pollution free industry and encouraging the employment of the handicapped. Unless proper controls are placed on any new industry locating in Marion, odor, noise and other types of pollution will increase for the whole community. While these controls might in a few cases discourage industry from locating in Marion, this is a small price to pay for creating a healthy environment.

III. Environmental Conditions

This study examines various unhealthy environmental conditions including fire occurrences, vehicle and pedestrian accidents, unpaved streets, inadequate recreation and school facilities, heavy traffic volumes, and overcrowding within dwelling units. By pinpointing where these conditions most often occur will enable the City to organize expenditures and programs to eliminate or reduce these unhealthy conditions. Attacking these problems would create additional financial commitments from the City but would be worth the expenditure in that Marion would become a safer, healthier, more wholesome place in which to live.

IV. Social Conditions

The following social conditions are studied: stillbirths and infant mortality, tuberculosis, illegitimate births, adult crimes against persons and property, juvenile delinquency, public welfare, school drop-outs and venereal disease. These conditions create both personal and

public problems but can only be solved through a personal rehabilitation. The study recommends a program of education and counseling in order to encourage those people afflicted with these unhealthy conditions to help themselves. Only positive effects would be the result.

V. General

A more general program of cleaning up littered areas and vacant lots, improving visibility at intersections, removing junk automobiles and appliances and landscaping various areas has been recommended in this study. Any program aimed at these problems, while requiring certain financial obligations from the local government, will, nevertheless, move Marion in the direction of a more wholesome environment for the entire community.

VI. Federal, State and Local Environmental Controls.

All existing federal, state and local environmental controls are applicable.

APPENDIX B

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT

1. Abstract: The quality of the existing housing stock within Marion is examined and various factors which influence housing are related to the projected future housing needs. Recommendations are made which is implemented would improve the living environment of the residents of the City.
2. Historical Impact: The policies and programs contained in this study would have a favorable impact on National Register properties in that the quality of the surrounding environment will be maintained through enforcement of building codes, zoning, subdivision regulations and utility extension policies.
3. Adverse Impacts: There are no adverse impacts on National Register properties which cannot be avoided should the proposed plans or policies be carried out.
4. Alternatives: The alternatives to the plans and policies contained in this study are the continued deterioration of the local environment in the vicinity of National Register properties due to incompatible land uses, low quality construction and maintenance and inadequate provision of utilities and other public services.
5. Long-Term Impacts: Long-term maintenance and enhancement of National Register properties will be improved due to the improvement and protection of the surrounding environment.

6. Federal, State and Local Historic Preservation Controls: All existing federal, state, municipal and county controls or programs currently being enforced for conserving and enhancing historical properties will be applicable to all policies and programs contained in this study.



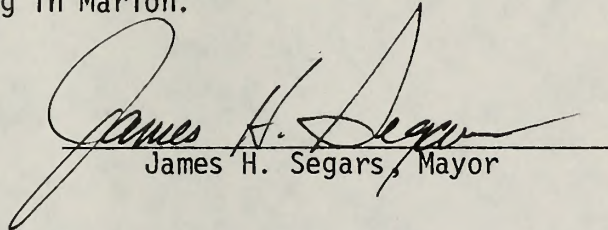
CITY OF MARION
P.O. Box 536
Marion, North Carolina 28752

OFFICE OF
THE CITY MANAGER

STATEMENT OF ENDORSEMENT

MARION HOUSING ELEMENT

As the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Marion, North Carolina,
I have reviewed the Housing Element and accept its findings, in principle, as
a guide to future housing planning in Marion.


James H. Segars, Mayor

Date: 3-13-78



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OFFICE OF
THE CITY MANAGER

CITY OF MARION

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James H. Taylor
 James H. Taylor, Mayor

Date: 3-13-77

